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ICHIEI ISHIBUMI

21

ハイスクールDxD

自由登校のルシファー

ファンタジア文庫

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「イッセーさま、女性の胸に関することが言葉に出せないのですか？」
「……それどころか、俺が口に出せない女子のあの部分が……見えないんだ……。視界にもやがかかったように、そこだけまるで認識できない……っ！」
「――ッ!?」

Encounter. The White Dragon and Black Angel

A certain night seven years ago.

The day I met that child, I remember it very clearly. It was a very cold and snowy night. Shemhazai had brought a boy before me — Azazel. The boy was wearing tattered clothes, his hair was messy, and he had wounds all over his body. What made me even more concerned were his eyes which expressed hostility, and demonstrated that he had been raised without being able to trust anyone. It was obvious that he had been harshly abused. In fact, this boy had been subjected to the cruelty of his own chichi[1] and sofu[2]. Shemhazai told me that this boy was using a deserted house somewhere in the mountains of Europe as a stronghold; both the police and agents of the Vatican wanted to apprehend him, but they were repelled by the youth's unimaginable ability. After the agents of the Vatican found out that this boy had the power of a Devil as well as — the power of a great Dragon, they planned to send several higher level agents. At that point, Shemhazai received contact from the side of the Devils, saying 'I hope that you guys can protect this boy'. When Shemhazai went with his subordinates to capture this boy, they discovered that he had the Sacred Gear of the [White Dragon] — the light wings of the Hakuryuukou; he was the Hakuryuukou of this generation. Although we constantly monitored all of the Longinus wielders, it could be described as the first time that we were right next to one, moreover, it was a boy. Upon seeing the boy for the first time, I spoke first.

"You sure did cause a lot of trouble. …What is your name?"

In response to my question, the boy remained silent for a while, and then replied

"…Vali…Lucifer."

Indeed, this boy — Vali wasn't just a Longinus wielder, he was also a descendant of the Maou, and could be said to have inherited the blood of the father of all Devils, [Lucifer]; his existence itself could be called a joke. The Vatican — if Heaven knew the truth, they would most certainly be afraid, and would immediately kill him. Or perhaps even if the Devils' side knew about his existence at that time…. …Shemhazai's source of information about Vali came from

a servant of the former Lucifer's son — a servant of Rizevim. That servant contacted Shemhazai — through Devils who had connections with Fallen Angels, and conveyed that information about Vali. Precisely because we knew this, Vali was able to safely take refuge inside the Grigori. If the Devils' side learned of the existence of Vali, how would the current government, who had a poor relationship with the Old Maou Faction, especially the Great King Family treat him? Perhaps he would be imprisoned until his death, or perhaps they would dispose of him as a person that had never even existed—. He was an existence who was born from a human, yet at the same time he had the power of Lucifer and the Hakuryuukou, so there wouldn't be a single person among the higher-ups that wouldn't panic. In order to allow Vali to survive, I felt that the choice that that servant made was not wrong. But not long after, we stopped receiving any contact from the servant. I was afraid that, no, that person had become a victim in order to allow Vali to successfully escape. Why did that servant try to save Vali even at the cost of their own life? Someone suggested that they did not want to see the good blood of Lucifer be lost. Perhaps it was because they couldn't turn a blind to the cruel treatment that Vali received from Rizevim. Anyway, under such circumstances, how would we deal with Vali?

Sacred Gear…perhaps to the System of the Sacred Gears, none of the wielders had a choice. Thus, I witnessed several tragedies. Being one-sidedly given a 'miracle' from the Heavens — it was more appropriate to call it an ability. The ability controlled them, and ruined their lives…the sight of them enveloping their surroundings in misfortune simply made me feel emptiness. Especially the wielders of the Sacred Gears of the Two Heavenly Dragons; their lives were burdened with the fate of battle, thus they experienced many rough situations and the lives of those all around them suffered similar misfortune; there were far too many of these cases. At that time, I thought that Vali might also have been drawn into such a fate.

After keeping Vali in the Grigori for a few months—. Although Vali hadn't opened himself up to us, he had already become accustomed to life in there. I also spoke with him seriously many times. After I informed him of the events related to that servant, his eyes widened in surprise, and he then turned around and said a single thing.

"……How stupid."

What did his young mind actually think about the demise of that

servant? Using that as an opportunity, Vali began to ask me how to use the Sacred Gear. Reading and writing, I increased my parenting of him. That boy slowly grew up and also began to show his potential. Relying on that, when he was finally able to communicate with Albion, which he was unable to do before, I was unable to forget the wide smile that had emerged on his face. He had a very vague concept of family and loved ones, but he unconsciously pursued power…the contradiction of his existence flashed before my eyes. Vali had inherited the blood of Lucifer, and also held the power of the Hakuryuukou. The child who possessed such an ability when he was born…his own chichi feared him, and was incited to abuse him by Rizevim. You should have opposed him. Even if he is your biological father, it was a life-threatening situation, so you should have been able to oppose him with that ability. When Vali heard me say this, his eyes were filled with sorrow.

"…If I wasn't beaten by that man, kaa-san[3] would have been be beaten in my place. Also…"

The next thing that Vali said was something that I would never forget in my life.

"…When that man was hitting me…he had a calm expression. Although I was scared, felt pain, and hated it, I think it was something that man had to do."

The man who feared Vali; upon seeing that his own son was being beaten without resistance, it was the first time that he could feel at ease. As the man who was born as the grandson of Lucifer, he should have been a 'special' existence from the moment that he was born. However, his own child — was a 'monster' greater than himself. He felt fear from the bottom of his heart. Having the expectations that came with the position of Lucifer's grandson, he was fearful that his child who had even more potential than himself would kill him while he was asleep in the future. There was also pressure from his own chichi, Rizevim. All of this was added together. That man beat his non-resistant son in order to secure a place for his own existence. That point was realised by this boy, so he allowed himself to be abused without resisting. —He was the child who was discarded by his family, without ever knowing anything about the warmth of a family.

A year after Vali came over to me—. The silver-haired youth who had learnt how to use his own power was already able to overwhelm the Sacred Gear wielders of his generation; he had

confidence in his own power, while moving forward with his life's goals. Vali said to me

"Azazel, I want to become stronger than anyone in this world. Where my own power, and my innate ability can reach, I want to know that clearly. I want to be stronger than Rizevim, the previous generation's Lucifer, and even the Sekiryuushintei[4] Great Red."

The boy who was born with the power that brought misfortune to himself decided to pursue the path of power. Compared to the power to protect someone, he didn't pursue the power to protect himself, rather, he pursued the power which wouldn't lose to anyone else. He will be at the mercy of the power of the Two Heavenly Dragons, or should I say—.

"Yes, Azazel. My opponent…what kind of person is the Sekiryuutei?"

When the silver-haired youth asked me that, his eyes were sparkling with the splendour of curiosity. Then, a few years later, Vali finally saw the Sekiryuutei. In his eyes, I wonder how he saw Ise—.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ chichi: father
2. ↑ Sofu: grandfather
3. ↑ kaa-san: mother
4. ↑ Red Dragon God Emperor

Khaos Disaster

Part 1

Five days had already passed since Trihexa was resurrected—.

I — Azazel, and Barakiel were currently together in the capital city of the Devils' side in the Maou's territory[1], Lilith. Within the conference room in the city which belonged to the Maou, a summit was being held (Devils' side, Fallen Angels' side), to discuss the response to Trihexa. Sirzechs did not attend because he had other urgent matters to attend to. The Governor of my side, Shemhazai, was issuing commands at the Grigori Institute. Five days ago, after Trihexa revived, it destroyed the main facilities of the Fallen Angels' Grigori Institute first, after which, it was transported to Heaven. It also devastated the First Heaven which acted as a frontline base, all the way up to the Sixth Heaven, the core area where the Seraphs resided. Those who were working at the main facilities of the Grigori, as well as the Angels who fought against Trihexa in Heaven had essentially been killed. The Cadres of my side — Sahariel and Penemue had both been severely injured, while their older subordinates had also died in battle. The damage which occurred in Heaven was even more serious. Three of the Seraphs had been seriously injured; Raphael had lost a leg while Uriel had lost an eye and an arm. Several of the Angels who had existed since ancient times had died. The final and uppermost Seventh Heaven was successfully defended, and the [System] which was left behind by the God of the Bible had been protected. …However, the sacrifices which were made for that were simply too great.

At that time, in the centre of the round table in the conference room, a video of that battle was played. The gigantic beast mercilessly sprayed out flames from its seven heads. The facilities of the Grigori, as well as the surrounding terrain were blown away in an instant. What happened in Heaven was an equally horrific and agonising sight. The bursts of fire that Trihexa spat out penetrated from the First Heaven up to the Third Heaven. The scene of Heaven was horribly tragic as it looked as though it had turned into a burning hell. Alongside it were the fake Sekiryuutei and mass-produced Evil Dragons, which caused even further damage. The

leaders of this were the legendary Evil Dragons who were second to none, Aži Dahāka and Apophis. The extent to which their attacks went was even greater than what Rizevim had done. …Many black feathers and white feathers had fallen…. Even Michael was unable to take on Trihexa, and he had been defeated. That guy wasn't in this conference room because he was still being treated, while also repairing the damage that was done to Heaven. After the main facilities of the Grigori and Heaven had been successively destroyed, the Imperial Beast of the Apocalypse transported again. On the third day after Trihexa had revived, the place that it had set its eyes on was—.

"…The Norse World was also enveloped in flames…"

Barakiel couldn't help shuddering as he looked at the video which was displayed in the centre of the round table. There were three levels in the Norse World; the lowest level contained the Realm of the Dead and the icy region of Niflheim, whereas the highest level where the gods lived was Asgard — the Valkyries were also there. Appearing in that place was a beast with seven heads and a body several hundred metres long — Trihexa. After transporting to the lowest level of the Norse World, it began its destruction there, and after a single day, everything had been destroyed. Today was the fifth day after its resurrection; Trihexa had finally reached the first level — the uppermost level. Trihexa usually flew in the air, and only descended to the ground when it fought. Speaking of its characteristics, it was like a human — or perhaps it was more appropriate to say that it was like a primate; it leaned forwards, it had four stout arms, and two legs which were even thicker than its arms. Although it didn't have any wings, it was able to fly in the air. Its body was covered with black fur, and things which were as hard as scales could be seen all over its body. A bright red colour resembling blood; it had these red protrusions throughout its body — they were similar to horns. Seven tails came out from its lower back, with each one being thick and long. They were also of different shapes. It possessed the features of a lion, dragon, and various other beasts. Everywhere that Trihexa and the Evil Dragons passed through became scorched earth, and the main buildings had been burnt to nothing but ashes. The Norse Gods, the souls of Valhalla[2] and the Valkyries were currently in a desperate fight to stop the advance of Trihexa's brigade. …But, a single one the fierce and powerful fireballs that Trihexa ejected completely wiped out the beautiful scenery of the Norse World, while the warriors were vaporised….

Drifting alongside Trihexa were two Evil Dragons — one of which was the [Diabolism Thousand Dragon][3] Aži Dahāka. Standing on top of Aži Dahāka was the [Eclipse Dragon][4] Apophis, in a human form. Aži Dahāka had created a countless number of magic circles within the air (magic from various different mythologies). The myriad of magic circles encompassed a vast area and released huge amounts of flames, ice, water, lightning, and storms. All of this magic was directed towards the souls of Valhalla. Apophis raised a single hand in the air. Gathered in this hand was an extraordinary amount of aura. In response to this action, the sky became dark. The radiant light which poured down from the sky had actually been obscured by the power of that Evil Dragon. He then created a large dark ball in the sky, and even blocked out the sun, causing the ground to become a world of darkness. When he used that forbidden technique to block out the sun in the past, a tragedy would occur. Activating the forbidden technique which was engraved on his body, from that ball of darkness emerged [Primordial Water][5] — the flow of a large, dark river. It would engulf everything. Even a god-class being would be seriously injured if they were to be engulfed by it. In order to prevent Apophis' forbidden technique from activating, the Valkyries that Rossweisse was a part of activated their own magic circles, and used techniques to hold it back. Rays of sunlight were able to return through the sphere of darkness, but were stopped again. The defensive battle in which the situation continuously shifted back and forth began. The Valkyries opposed it desperately, but a smile emerged on Apophis' face, clearly showing that he was enjoying this tug of war. Compared to Rizevim, these two Evil Dragons, Aži Dahāka and Apohis had even more power than him. The current situation had already far exceeded what happened during the attack on the Underworld by the Demonic Beasts[6].

The factions which had peaceful relations with each other sent aid and combat forces to the mythologies which had been attacked…. However, facing Trihexa's brigade which could easily transport themselves anywhere regardless of the most powerful barriers in the world, every faction was so busy guarding against attacks and reinforcing their own territory that they were unable to move. Despite that, the Devils, Fallen Angels, and Heaven still sent over the combat support that they could. The anti-terrorist group [DxD] also went to the Norse World. After all, they had received a lot of care from that jisan Odin in the past. If they didn't show up now, there wouldn't be another chance for them to do so. Especially [DxD], they had been fighting all night these past three days. …If

the fighting time was lengthened, they wouldn't be able to support it either. Hopefully they could have some more time to rest…but it was very difficult at the moment. One of the Maous, Falbium Asmodeus said

"These Evil Dragons have not completely destroyed any of the factions; they simply think that they can accomplish their task by destroying some of it. After that, they immediately head over to their next target for destruction. Their strategy is simply too unrefined. …They're able to transport themselves without any signs of preparation, which should be part of Aži Dahāka's forbidden technique. That is also rather difficult to deal with. Could it be that those fake Sekiryuutei can use Boost and Transfer, which allows them to enhance the forbidden technique? If that really is the case…. No matter the time or place, they would be able to invade regardless of any barrier. That would make the cooperation between various factions quite difficult, after all, each faction places the protection of its own faction above all else."

Falbium shared everything that he had thought of with a quiet voice. Serafall said

"Are the Evil Dragon-kuns moving according to someone's directions? It looks like they're just rampaging around, but it gives off the impression that they're actually acting in accordance to some kind of plan. To some extent, it can be seen that they've been moving sequentially…"

Choosing the main facilities of the Grigori to be first was because they wanted to destroy it as soon as possible. Compared to the defence of other factions, even if it had significantly more advanced technology, the level of combat strength was insufficient. The size of the facilities was small in comparison to Lilith. If the defence was broken through, it could be destroyed in an instant. After destroying the Fallen Angels' side in the Underworld, they would go to destroy the Devils' side that was also in the Underworld. —That was what we originally thought; we never imagined that they would move to Heaven. It was truly unexpected. On the surface, it appeared as though they were just going on a rampage, but they actually had a plan of attack. Hearing this, Falbium spoke softly again.

"Indeed, I've already contacted the Greek mythology just in case. I asked them to monitor Hades. There were rumours that he was secretly in contact with the Evil Dragon Apophis, and it was also

him who informed them of the shortcut when Rizevim attacked Heaven. If the situation is similar to when the Underworld was attacked, it won't be good if he takes advantage of any loopholes. If Hades comes out again, the damage will be even greater, so it's fortunate that we have help from the Greek mythology. Those who have been secretly associated with Rizevim are also being monitored. However, if the situation becomes chaotic, we'll just have to ask those allied mythologies and associated organisations to get rid of them, even if they are a god."

It appeared as though Falbium had already made a pre-emptive strike. It was only natural for Hades, as well as the countless number of associations that Rizevim had when he invaded Heaven to be monitored. Even before that, Sirzechs and I had gone to visit his side along with two Longinus wielders. Another suspicious god, Indra — Śakra had previously provided support to those against us, so it was not difficult to sense his hostility. Aside from the first generation Sun Wukong of Team [DxD], various other strong people had been sent over. …What was this God of War planning? Supporting us from behind was the God of Destruction Shiva, but what exactly do you want? …Well whatever, we'll just accept his good intentions for now. …Or should we go back and think of our countermeasures against Trihexa? Anyway, every faction needed to strengthen their own defences. In order to prepare for a second attack, and strengthen the defences of the main remaining facilities, all important research data and results were being hidden deep underground. Really, among the facilities which were destroyed, my laboratory was included. There were also things which I hadn't finished researching…. It looks like that part about research on Sacred Gears will have to be delayed. But the most important thing that was lost were those outstanding subordinates… Damn it, even if I live for a longer time, I won't be able to get used to this guilt or regret.

The capital of the Devils' side, Lilith, was starting to deploy the military and police in major cities; high-class Devils, as well as ultimate class Devils and their servants were also on standby. But that was also inadequate. The news of my facilities being destroyed had already spread throughout the Underworld. The general population of the Underworld was afraid of the unrest like the attack of the Demonic Beasts again. The Devils had started to prepare emergency shelters, but under these circumstances, everything was very confusing and there was unrest everywhere. The video on the round table showed citizens who were planning to take refuge outside the city thus causing traffic jams due to the

sheer volume of vehicles; they were Devils who were nervous and untrusting of the shelters.

The video display cut over to show other scenes in which Devils were causing havoc as they took advantage of the confusion, while the local military went to supress the situation. …No matter where, it was chaos. I was annoyed at the fact that I could only stay here and issue commands right now. If I knew that this would happen, with that legendary creature, I should have…made a contract with the King of Demonic Beasts Typhon[7] so that I could prepare a new set of artificial Sacred Gear armour. …It was a bit too early to retire from the frontlines. —At that time, the video returned to the battle in the Norse World. There were new reinforcements again. Oh! From the Hindu mythology, the Ape God Hanuman[8], and the God Ganesha[9] descended from the sky with an immeasurable number of warriors! Even the Asuras, and the King of the Asuras, Varuna[10] came along with his subordinates! Ever since their war against Indra, these Asuras had not been seen in the world! For them to actually appear under such circumstances, it was truly admirable! Amongst all the mythologies, the monsters of Hindu mythology were still incredible. After the gods entered the battle, the army of fake Sekiryuutei and Evil Dragons which were around Trihexa were attacked by the gods, and faded into particles of light. Despite that, a steady stream of mass-produced Evil Dragons still appeared all around Trihexa; it was truly a difficult situation. Rossweisse activated a technique to stop the mass-produced Evil Dragons, but, perhaps because there were too many Evil Dragons or they had already become immune to the effect of the technique, Rossweisse's technique didn't have much of an effect. …However, the fact that the number of fake Sekiryuutei didn't increase was fortunate. While I was just thinking that it was fortunate…a change occurred in Trihexa's dragon heads. What was it spitting out!? Lying on the ground was the dirt-covered object that it had spat out. —It was actually an enormous egg! I had a bad feeling about it…. All of the VIPs who were present were also thinking about the same thing, and our worst premonition was realised. The egg slowly cracked open, and from within it — a large volume of monsters encased in full red armour flew out! ……Damn it! We were completely speechless…! We simply could not understand the principle of how the dragon's head of Trihexa was able to give birth to fake Sekiryuutei! …Just what kind of modifications did that bastard make!? That bastard, just how much malice did he have to leave behind to us before he was willing to rest…!

However, with the cooperation of the Norse Gods, as well as the

Hindu Gods, there was already a significant improvement compared to when the war had just begun. With so many gods entering the war, Trihexa still had not suffered any significant damage, so I couldn't help feeling amazed by its power. This was the true power of the legendary Imperial Beast which was on par with Great Red as recorded in the Apocalypse…! Even gods had to come forward to fight…. The enemy was a beast beyond the normal, and there were also the innumerable number of Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei on top of that…. It was a scene which basically looked like the battle of the Apocalypse…! Such a scene had not been seen since the Three Factions were at war, no, this should be even worse than that—. At that time, Trihexa's attacks suddenly stopped. A magic circle used for transportation appeared above its heads, and at the same time, its heads disappeared from the battlefield one by one. Finally, Trihexa's enormous body completely disappeared from that location. Towards this unexpected occurrence, all of us who were in the conference room were taken aback. We then calmed down immediately, and sent units out to investigate where they had transported to. But, after a few minutes, there was still no news about their transportation. Rather, we had completely lost sight of them….

[Wooooooooooooooooooohhhh!]

Faced with the sudden disappearance which still confused us, the cheers of victory echoed out from the video stream. Indeed, it seemed the war in the Norse World had finally concluded.

"From the looks of things, the Norse World has been saved."

Sirzechs said as he walked into the conference room. Once he had finished doing what he had to do, he finally sat down at his seat in the conference room. After watching us sigh in relief, Sirzechs made a wry smile and said

"Although we don't know what they're trying to do…in short, this battle can be considered to be a successful defence, which isn't bad."

"Well said ☆"

Compared to Serafall's gleeful smile, Falbium suddenly made a sinister expression towards the Evil Dragons.

"…It's because of the Holy Grail, right?"

…He was really sharp. Really, I also agreed with his view. I was afraid that the Holy Grail that they were manipulating had some kind of mutation or change, or perhaps…they had exceeded the time limit; that was what I thought. They could mass-produce Evil Dragons if they wanted, but it wasn't infinite. In order to attain the infinite, it was only possible for the complete Ophis of the past. However, the rest that was attained here was extremely precious. Between the various factions, we were able to obtain combat strength, and time to finish compiling intelligence, which was a rare opportunity. Sirzechs stood up again.

"Next is to convey this news to everyone in the Underworld."

The Maou Lucifer said that he had to convey that to the uneasy and confused public—.

Part 2

In the broadcast room of the Maou's territory, Lilith, Sirzechs and Serafall were currently making an urgent broadcast. I was watching them from the listening next to the broadcast room. Using all of the channels in the territory, the two Maous were reporting this matter to everyone in the Underworld. The filming began, and of the two Maous who were sitting at the table — Sirzechs was the first one to speak.

"Everyone in the Underworld, currently, the entirety of the Underworld also includes the Fallen Angels' territory; the world of Devils has been subjected to an unprecedented crisis."

Sirzechs' voice was very clear, and his tone was also calm. The Maou Lucifer recounted the events which had occurred to the public one by one. Rizevim was the culprit behind everything; he manipulated the Evil Dragons, revived the legendary Imperial Beast Trihexa, and right now, Trihexa was unleashing destruction upon the territories of various factions—. The video of the battle that only we in the top brass had just seen was then played — the facilities of the Grigori, Heaven, and the Norse World were suffering from Trihexa's attacks.

"The beast that you are seeing right now is the legendary Imperial

Beast Trihexa—”

Seeing that even gods were participating in battle, the ordinary Devils would feel as though it was truly the end of the world…. The video then cut over show that the Norse World had been successfully defended, and presented the image of our side which was cheering due to victory. How would the Devils feel when seeing such a scene?

“The ones shown fighting in this battle aren’t just Devils. There are also the Fallen Angels and the Angels of Heaven who have formed an alliance with us, as well as strong support from other mythologies that have rushed over to help us one after the other. Our opposing force against Trihexa and the Evil Dragons has increased significantly. Although they have been temporarily repulsed, they will reappear soon, and continue their destruction. The scale of this has already tremendously exceeded the ‘Demonic Beast Riot’ which occurred several months ago. Nevertheless, to everyone in the Underworld, please stay calm, there is no need to panic. That is because we have the star of hope.”

The next image which was shown was the talented youths. The Chichiryuutei Ise, Switch Princess Rias, the next head of the House of Bael Sairaorg, Heaven’s Joker Dulio, and the others. The citizens of the Underworld were all familiar with the people who appeared there one by one.

“—That’s right, this is the anti-terrorist group [DxD]. Right now, in order to protect the world of us Devils, as well as the citizens of the world, and in order to protect the worlds of other mythologies, these brave warriors who make me proud are now fighting fiercely with their lives on the line.”

Serafall, who was on the side also appeared in front of the camera and smiled towards it.

“That’s right! Everyone! I will also be going to the frontlines, so there’s no need to worry!”

Sirzechs couldn’t help showing a slight smile as he looked at Serafall, and then continued to elaborate.

“We will definitely protect everyone in the Underworld. Even if I have to bet my life on it, I swear that I will protect it even if it costs me my life.”

Sirzechs' words were very firm. …Seeing the figures of Ise and the others who were just shown, how would ordinary Devils feel? At least compared to having a suspicious person like me on TV, it would give the people more peace of mind if Sirzechs personally said that. The broadcast of Sirzechs and Serafall then continued onto the topic of the future, and also the injustices of the Rating Games. For dozens of minutes afterwards, they continuously made such announcements to the citizens—.

After the broadcast ended, Sirzechs and Serafall got up from their seats and left. I said to Serafall

"You're still the same even at a time like this, Serafall."

Serafall made her usual peace pose with two fingers — and then she became even bolder.

"I should act this way even more during a time like this. —Well, I also have to go to the frontlines."

Sirzechs smiled lightly.

"You and your servants always cause trouble."

"Really, you don't need to say such unfriendly things. Are we really good friends who have come together? Moreover, I only come out at these times, so I really get the feeling that 'I'm a Maou'."

I also said to Sirzechs

"The Cadres of my side will also be sent here to you. The Seraphim of Heaven will also come here. Ah, it's almost as if Armageddon[11] has arrived early."

Serafall asked Sirzechs

"What about you Sirzechs-chan?"

The intention behind this question was whether the Maou Lucifer would also be fighting. Sirzechs' expression became stern, and he then said

"—I will go. Let me do something that a 'Maou' should do as well. …But before that, I have some things to deal with."

Sirzechs would also be heading out—. I was afraid that I would be able to see his true form soon. That was because it would be a long

and arduous battle. After Serafall confirmed his reply, she said

“Well, I’ll be going first then!”

And left early to go off somewhere. That left me and Sirzechs. Sirzechs asked me softly

“—The plan from before, it can be started at any time, right?”

That matter was centred around our Three Factions…and a certain ‘strategy’.

“That’s right, I’ve gotten the agreement of the other gods. The next step waits on the decision of you Maous. Even if you guys say no, it’ll just be us who will implement it at that time.”

If that ‘strategy’ was really implemented…it would be both difficult, and cruel. In fact, I did not want to involve Sirzechs and Michael in it. However, Sirzechs smiled at me

“When it all comes down to this, you could say that we all share the same fate, right?”

“…Actually, is this really for the best? Say, Sirzechs. You weren’t originally Lucifer. …Your real name is ‘Sirzechs Gremory’. I’m not saying this with any bad intentions, it’s just that—”

Do you need to bear the name of ‘Lucifer’ to such an extent? I always thought that. Sirzechs was still quite young as a Devil, he was a young man who hadn’t even lived a thousand years yet. However, he was going to put his own life at stake for the Underworld. …He was not born into the family of Lucifer. He was just the extraordinarily strong young master of an aristocratic family. Sirzechs looked up at the ceiling, and he narrowed his eyes slightly.

“I understand what you’re saying. It’s already been half a year since I’ve been able to talk to you, Azazel…so I also understand. Fallen Angels can be unexpectedly gentle.”

Don’t say that. Otherwise, at that time, your determination will dull…. Sirzechs continued

“I worry about what will happen afterwards. Azazel, we current Maous finally passed the proposal for the next plan yesterday.”

I see, they had even agreed on that. It's really only at times like these that you'll think and act seriously, you guys….

"Leaving Belphegor and Mammon aside, a new problem has been placed before us. That is time, it is necessary to have time for the citizens to accept it."

"But, there isn't anyone else is there?"

All of a sudden, Sirzechs revealed a lonely expression.

"The only pity is…I won't be able to see it once the plan is implemented. I originally thought that I had to see it for myself, their match—"

I couldn't help scratching the back of my head; you really can say it, Sirzechs.

"You definitely shouldn't say that. You've also shaken my mind a bit. …But let's leave it at that, this alternative work can be considered complete, right?"

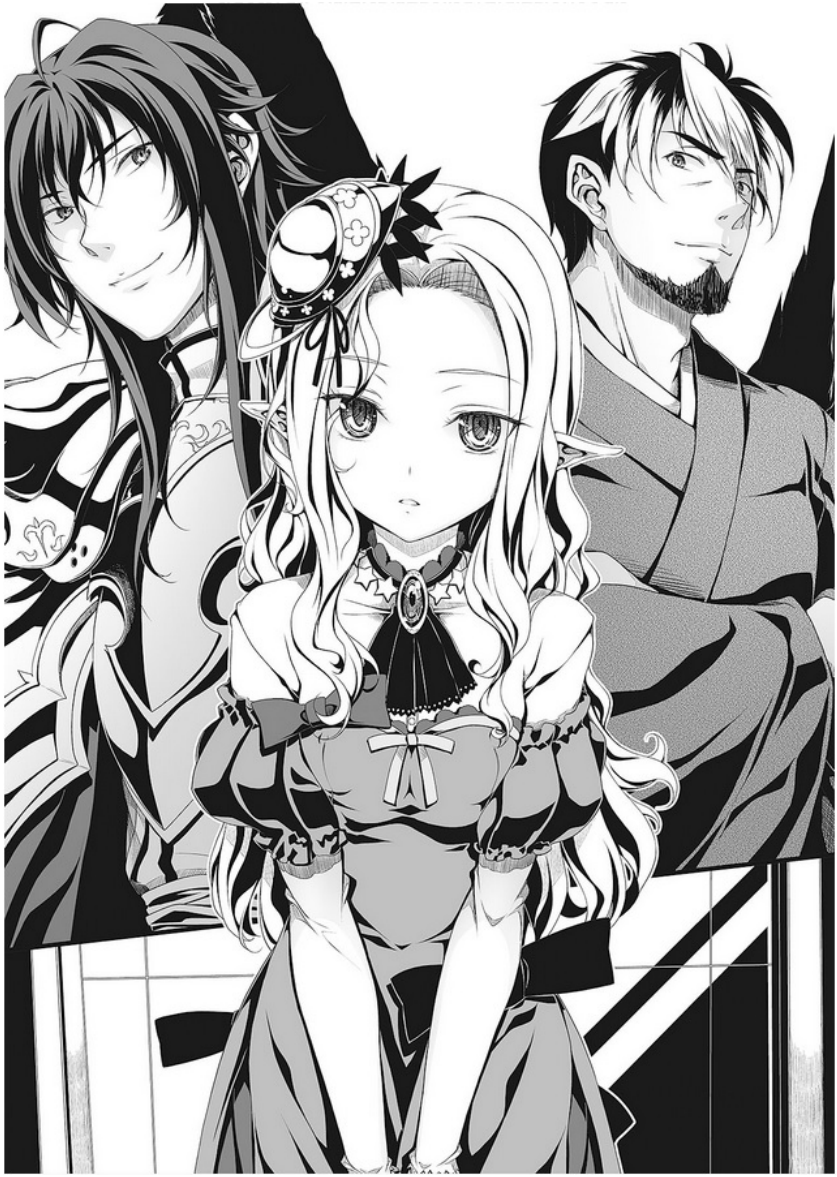
"Yeah, he'll stay behind."

"I see, I understand so we can't blame him for not being here, right? Then, there are no problems to implement that plan."

Regarding the next matter, Sirzechs and I smiled at each other, and at that time, someone appeared before us. It was a blonde-haired girl. Her two eyes were a crimson colour like blood; she was a vampire. I recognised this vampire girl. That was because she was the girl that I met before the incident in Vampire's country. Moreover, I was also looking forward to this girl's appearance.

"Yo, Elmenhilde."

Hearing my voice, Elmenhilde Karnstein also greeted us. Indeed, it was that vampire who was sent by the Karnstein family of the Carmilla faction, Elmenhilde. That lofty, high-class blonde-haired vampire girl. But compared to her arrogant attitude from before, she had a more vague atmosphere now. The Carmilla country had suffered serious damage, and was caught in the difficulties of having to rebuild from scratch. Also, the nobles of the Carmilla faction no longer tried to cover up the crisis that the country was in, and they began to accept help from the rest of the world.



This young girl was sent to other places as a vanguard, but I heard that it was also a rather difficult job. When Ise happened to meet her at that time…I saw her become completely astonished. Elmenhilde turned to look at Sirzechs; she intended to start the conversation in here. I waved my hands and said

“There’s no problem.”

And allowed her to start speaking. She handed me a memory stick. …They did indeed have it. Elmenhilde said

“As you said Former Governor-dono, this is the research data that Marius Tepes had hidden.”

That’s right, I was looking for that; the information about the Holy Grail that even Rizevim did not know about. As the Prince of Vampires, Marius Tepes had been investigating Valerie’s Holy Grail. I always had doubts about it. Was all of the information that Marius had on the Holy Grail really taken away by Rizevim? Marius was indeed the type of person who would be manipulated and deceived by Rizevim, but as a pure-blooded vampire, and as a vampire who had inherited the royal bloodline, would he really commit such a stupid deed to allow other races to take away all of his research? I thought that he would have hidden at least one or two pieces of information about the core of the Holy Grail. Thus, I sent investigators through my own network to investigate it together with the Carmilla faction there. Everything was investigated, from the Tepes’ Palace to the all of the personal belongings of Marius. Elmenhilde said

“Marius Tepes’ ingredients — one of the humans who had their blood sucked by vampires had previously undisclosed information about the Holy Grail. …He had a technique engraved on his body.”

So that’s how it was, Marius had actually engraved the hidden information and techniques onto the body of a human.

“Before Rizevim Livan Lucifer was received in my country, it seems like he freed that person, and exiled him to live abroad. We also expended a lot of effort to find him.”

—Elmenhilde added.

Oh, I didn’t expect that Marius would actually have such elaborate preparations. That bastard Marius, he had actually sent the hidden information abroad before Rizevim even arrived. …That’s why it could never be found. I looked at the memory stick in my hand as I thanked Elmenhilde

“Thanks for your effort, you’ve been a great help.”

“Do you also want to see Ise while you’re here, he’s currently receiving treatment in the hospital here…”

I teased Elmenhilde, and that girl’s face instantly became bright red.

“W-W-Why did the Sekiryuutei’s name come up here!? I, h-he’s got

nothing to do with me!”

Hoho, that was a good reaction. I heard that a lot of things happened when she met Ise again; I just said that, but it actually hit the bullseye! Really, that guy Ise, he’d very naturally made a girl fall for him again. That kid really only gets non-human girls, and girls with strange personalities to like him. Elmenhilde recomposed herself, and said farewell to us

“I’ll be returning now.”

And then left from there. Well, I’ll immediately try and understand this new information about the Holy Grail now. Also, Slash Dog — Tobio had brought back something from Agreas that I wanted to investigate if I had time. I had already secretly asked Tobio to investigate it first…as expected, it actually turned out to be that thing. Incidentally, the Evil Dragons had already been swept clean, and Agreas had been recovered. It was then returned to its original place — and it was given to the people in the Agares’ territory to begin the investigation. Sirzechs said to me

“Well, I’m going to talk with my peerage next.”

“Well, I’m going to go see those kids again.”

Ise had not awoken since the fight against Rizevim. I was also quite concerned. It was rather strange that there weren’t any signs of him awakening even though he should soon. The members of [DxD] who had gone to the Norse World were also very concerned about Ise’s situation, and would also be going to the hospital. …After I sighed, I said to Sirzechs

“It appears as though we’ll be in contact for a long time.”

“If it’s you, Azazel, I won’t feel bored.”

“Although I’ll still be following a slightly annoying Angel.”

After we both laughed, we left that place. I looked at the memory stick as I walked down the stairs, and I couldn’t stop the corner of my mouth from making a smile. Look, Livan. You sure gave us a lot of awful things to deal with. We met in the Vampire’s country, and after that, Agreas was taken, and Heaven was attacked. But, always being on the road that you’ve set doesn’t suit my style. Nor is it what we do. I’ll stop it for you to see this time. Even at the expense of my life—.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ In this case, it is referring to Sirzechs' territory.
2. ↑ The souls of Valhalla are the souls of those who have died in battle, and are ruled over by Odin. Their purpose if to assist Odin when Ragnarök comes.
3. ↑ Kanji was Forbidden Dragon of Demonic/Magic origin, hiragana was Diabolism Thousand Dragon.
4. ↑ Kanji was Primordial Darkness Dragon, hiragana was Eclipse Dragon.
5. ↑ Primordial Water seems to originate from Egyptian mythology as the 'thing' that existed before all creation. Apophis supposedly swam in these primordial water before the creation of the cosmos.
6. ↑ Refers to the events of V11-12 in which the Demonic Beasts of [Annihilation Maker] were unleashed upon the Underworld.
7. ↑ Typhon is a beast from Greek mythology known as the most fearsome and often has links to snakes.
8. ↑ Hanuman is a Hindu god with the face of a monkey. He is a devotee of Rama and sometimes portrayed as an incarnation/ avatar of Shiva.
9. ↑ Ganesha is a Hindu god with the head of an elephant. He is revered as a 'remover of obstacles', and associated with intellect, wisdom, arts and sciences. He is also the son of Shiva.
10. ↑ Varuna is the Hindu god of water and the 'celestial ocean' and also the King of the Asuras. The Asuras are known as demigods in Hindu mythology.
11. ↑ Armageddon in Christianity is the location at which armies will gather to fight at the end of the world.

Life.1 Amidst the Feast of the Imperial Beast

Part 1

I — Kiba Yuuto, had just finished a major battle, and returned to the capital of the Devils' world, Lilith. After we had just barely managed to defend the Norse World in a battle against Trihexa, we, the team members of [DxD] temporarily disbanded and returned to our own territories. The Angels who were led by Dulio returned to Heaven, which was currently being repaired. In order to suppress the outbreak of civil unrest in the Underworld, Sairaorg Bael and Seekvaira Agares immediately rushed to the scene after being treated. Sona-zenkaichou and her peerage also went along to help. Including me, the Gremory household went to [Serafall Memorial Hospital] which was in the capital of Lilith. Named after Serafall Leviathan-sama, it was one of the most advanced hospitals with cutting-edge medical equipment in the Underworld. Ise-kun had been admitted here for treatment.

Five days ago, during the battle in Agreas, Ise-kun awakened Dragon Deification in order to save his parents. But, the price of attaining such a level of power was disheartening; as soon as the change was released, the repercussions immediately began to take effect. Firstly, all of the organs in his body stopped functioning, while his heart and other important parts still barely continued to function. However, Asia-san's healing ability had almost no effect, which showed just how serious the recoil from Dragon Deification was. After being transported to the hospital, Ise-kun was immediately taken to the Intensive Care Unit, and all kinds of life support devices were connected to his whole body. We all looked at Ise-kun with a sorrowful expression as he lay in the Intensive Care Unit. Asia-san continued to cry as she kept watch over Ise-kun. Ise-kun's outlook remained unpredictable, and he was still in a critical condition—.

Even at this time, the terrorist attacks of Trihexa and the army of Evil Dragons still continued. The main facilities of the Grigori as well as Heaven had been easily destroyed. Even during the short time that we engaged in battle with it, we were trembling with fear

—. Half a day after Ise-kun had been sent to the hospital, Azazel-sensei, who was in the battle conference room of the Maou's city, sent a message to the hospital. —Collect a certain thing, and then put Ise-kun inside it. What came through was that one message. Although the medical staff at the hospital were somewhat puzzled by the instruction from this Fallen Angel, they still collected that thing from the hospital. —That thing was breast milk. They didn't just ask the obstetrics and gynaecology department, they also allowed all of the mothers in the hospital who could produce milk to donate their breast milk. However, the amount of breast milk which was obtained from the hospital did not reach the volume that Azazel-sensei specified. Thus, the breast milk from all of the hospitals in the capital were sent over, and a considerable amount had finally been amassed. While remaining mystified, the medical staff transferred the breast milk into a glass box which would be able to hold a person. Five portions of Phoenix Tears were also put in, and then mixed so that it would be homogeneous. The final product which was obtained was a mixture of breast milk and Phoenix Tears. Azazel-sensei then had us place Ise-kun inside it to soak. This kind of scene would cause people to feel troubled upon seeing it.

Having unleashed the power of the Dragon of Infinity and the Dragon of Dreams, he suffered severe physical and mental damage, and while still being attached to life-support systems, he actually had to be soaked in breast milk. However, none of those present actually had any objections to that proposal. There was no one to stop it from happening. I guess everyone had thoughts which coincided with mine. —Maybe, this approach would work. Despite the fact that this was a bizarre idea, the two words 'Ise-kun' and 'breasts' were something that fit together. It was a combination that had produced miracles up until now! Suddenly, Koneko-chan murmured quietly.

"…Speaking of which, Ise-senpai had once said something like that."

—After drinking milk[1], I feel like all of my fatigue has disappeared.

That was what Ise-kun had said himself. We gradually turned our hopes into belief. Everyone waited expectantly as they carried out the proposal. —Ise-kun was maintained in a state where he was connected to life-support devices, as he began to be immersed in the breast milk. Even though they were wearing surgical masks, it

was clear and obvious that the medical staff were highly confused. A few minutes after Ise-kun had been immersed into the mixture of breast milk and Phoenix Tears—. The life support device's ECG displayed a significant response! The attending doctor had also been called.

"How can this be!? Up until now, hasn't he been in a state in which his organ functions couldn't even be maintained without all of the life support equipment!? S-Simply immersing him in breast milk has caused him to start functioning normally again!?"

It was simply inconceivable. A phenomenon which had not occurred within the history of medicine had just happened in front of us. Afterwards, Ise-kun's breathing returned to normal, and despite still being unconscious, it was evident that he was now quickly recovering. It was simply a miracle. No, perhaps this was inevitable? For Ise-kun, who was known as the Oppai Dragon, anything related to breasts could be considered his weapon, and could also be his spiritual food—. Seeing Ise-kun slowly starting to recover, the girls burst into tears in front of the Intensive Care Room. Rias-zenbuchou said

"…Uh, it really is great! I'll make Ise drink milk[2] every day from now on!"

Akeno-san then said

"…Yes, we'll build a personal ranch for Ise-kun so that cows can be bred!"

Asia-san wiped away her tears as she said

"I! When I can produce breast milk, I'll definitely give it to Ise-san to drink! I'll work hard in the future in order to help Ise-san recover!"

"Ah! Let him drink more! Cow's milk has a lot of nutritional value! That's right, it's even possible to cure the Sekiryuutei with it!"

Even Xenovia was crying while she cried out such incomprehensible things. Ravel-san, Rossweisse-san, and Gasper-kun were all wiping their tears away, as smiles emerged on their faces.

"Although I don't quite understand, it really suits Ise-sama's style!"

"Indeed, I really don't quite understand it, but I also feel relieved."

“As expected of Ise-senpai!”

Soothing tears also streamed down Koneko-chan’s face as she said

“…But, that’s the worst.”

—The Sekiryuutei had recovered by relying on breast milk. …In regards to something like this, even I don’t know what to say, Ise-kun…. … Anyway, once the world is at peace, I’ll make lots of stews and your favourite dishes. I think it’ll be good as long as dairy products are used. Upon seeing such a scene, Ise-kun’s parents also blushed slightly as they looked on.

“…It’s truly very good news! But, our son, I’m so overjoyed that I’m even crying!”

“…When he was a little baby, he was always drinking a lot of my breast milk. Even like this, our son is still like a baby…! But, it really is too good!”

Although Ise-kun’s oji-san and oba-san[3] felt embarrassed, they felt joy from the depths of their hearts because of their own child’s recovery. Afterwards, Ise-kun’s condition stabilised, the life support equipment was also detached, and he was transferred to a personal patient room. Ise-kun was still unconscious, but Trihexa would not wait for him. They had already directed their malice towards the Norse World. We had been appointed as members of the anti-terrorist team [DxD]. The responsibility of this was heavy. We entrusted the unconscious Ise-kun to his parents, while we headed out to the battlefield.

…Then, having been successful in defence, we immediately returned to the hospital. The members who rushed to the hospital were mainly the members of the Occult Research Club. In order to repair the frontline base of Heaven, Irina-san had temporarily split up from us. Not long ago, Sirzechs-sama had made an urgent announcement to the entire Underworld. The anxious dialogue of the patients and their families within the hospital was evident before our eyes. Throughout the hospital, the words ‘war’ and ‘evacuation’ could be heard. In order to eliminate the unease of these common Devils, we need to stand up and come forward. …So Ise-kun, your strength is needed. How had Ise-kun been since we left…. Rias-zenbuchou went over to the nurse’s office to ask about Ise-kun’s condition. In the end—.

“Is that true?”

Hearing the words that Rias-zenbuchou just said, Asia couldn't stop herself from crying. Remembering that this was a hospital, she immediately covered her mouth with her hands. …She then let out tears of joy. Looking at her reaction, it seems Ise-kun had finally woken up! We immediately rushed over to the patient room that Ise-kun was in—. As soon as we entered the hospital room, we saw — Ise-kun, sitting up on his bed. His parents were also beside him. While we were fighting in the Norse World, Ise-kun had finally regained consciousness! Even after receiving such injuries, he was actually able to sit up right now…. It seems that Azazel-sensei's nonsensical treatment method had actually paid off. …But, that was a treatment method that would only be effective on Ise-kun…. Ise-kun watched the TV screen with a solemn expression, and then turned towards us after he noticed that we were here.

"Yo, everyone!"

Ise-kun greeted us with a smile. We also exposed smiles of relief as we moved closer to him. Akeno-san wiped her tears.

"…It's great that you're really alright. …If you died, Ise-kun, I don't know what I'd do…"

During the battle in the Norse World, Akeno-san showed her fortitude when she unleashed an oversized Holy Lightning Dragon upon the army of Evil Dragons. However, she herself was one of the most mentally vulnerable among the team. During the [Demonic Beast Riot], Akeno-san had lost her will to fight when she didn't know whether Ise-kun was dead or alive, which was also a side of her which had never been seen. However, compared to this time, I felt that Akeno-san had made progress mentally. That was because she was together with other female members. Although she was constantly worried about Ise-kun before she went to the Norse World, she was more courageous than anyone else during battle. Even Ise-kun's manager, Ravel-san, flew with her wings of fire and swept away the army of Evil Dragons. As a male of the Gremory household, Gasper-kun also said

"I'll deal with Ise-senpai's share as well!"

And then transformed into the black beast — Balor; he ferociously blew away many of the mass-produced Evil Dragons. It wasn't just the Gremory household. The Sitri household and the other members of [DxD] also gave their all to fight in Ise-kun's place. Moreover, even I—. Seeing his healthy appearance, everyone felt relieved. Ise-

kun said to Rias-zenbuchou

“I’m sorry, I gave everyone a lot of trouble after becoming like this…”

Rias-zenbuchou held Ise-kun’s hand and smiled lightly.

“You don’t need to be like that. You’ve already fought hard enough. You were able to safely rescue ogifu-sama and ogibo-sama[4] and even gave that Rizevim a fatal injury…you should deserve our praise.”

Ise-kun gave a wry smile in response to Rias-zenbuchou.

“I saw the news. Rizevim seems to have been defeated. It was indeed by Vali’s hand, right?”

Rias-zenbuhou replied to Ise-kun’s question

“The final blow was dealt by Fafnir.”

Hearing this, Ise-kun was surprised at first, but then quickly accepted it. He looked up at the ceiling, and muttered

“…Indeed, it should be Fafnir. He definitely wouldn’t forgive Rizevim, and that’s because he’s the bastard who hit Asia.”

He was truly the Golden Dragon King. Ise-kun then asked another question

“What about Níðhöggr?”

That Evil Dragon was eventually disposed of by Crom Cruach. It was an entirely one-sided fight, even without needing us to join the fight at all. From the beginning until the end, Níðhöggr could not stop trembling in front of Crom Cruach. After listening to that, Ise-kun expressed his agreement

“Yeah, that bastard couldn’t possibly defeat Crom Cruach.”

But, since the beginning, Ise-kun, he…the expression in his eyes was unusual. His gaze…although it moved about between the chests of the girls…. Under normal circumstances, it was certainly like him. But, he currently seemed confused at the sight before his eyes, and kept using his hand to rub his eyes. It was almost as if he couldn’t clearly make out what was in front of his eyes. Everyone else had noticed, and Asia-san asked

“Ise-san…? What’s wrong?”

His behaviour was simply too abnormal. Ise-kun blinked, and then he continued to stare at the chests of the girls as he replied

“Well, how should I say it; Rias’, Asia’s, Akeno-san’s, Xenovia’s… girls’—”

Ise-kun’s words only went halfway.

“…Strange, I can’t say it. It’s very strange. I clearly know in my mind what to say…that, it’s op…”

He seemed to want to say a certain word. I think that word should be ‘oppai’. After all, he had just been continually looking the ‘girls’ breasts’ and wanted to say that. Ise-kun shook his head, then rubbed his throat with his hand, and tried speaking again.

“Op—. Damn, I can’t say it! Hmm—. …Just what is happening? Bre—. …This is a joke right, it’s just those two words that I can’t say…!”

Ise-kun desperately wanted to say ‘oppai’, ‘chichi’, ‘mune’ and other words[5] that were related to a woman’s breasts, but these words were all similarly stuck and couldn’t be said. Everyone finally realised that the situation was already too abnormal, and their faces instantly became stiff. Ravel-san was the first to speak

“Ise-sama, could it be that you can’t say any of the words related to women’s breasts?”

In response to her question, Ise-kun quietly nodded. Then, from his mouth came even more astounding news.

“…Not just that, I don’t know why, but I can’t say those female parts…and I can’t see them…there seems to be something blurred in my vision, and because of that, I can’t see it at all…!”

[“—What!?”]

…In response to the news that Ise-kun just said, everyone present, including his parents, were shocked and in disbelief! He loved women’s breasts more than anyone else; he was deeply obsessed with them, and he was also the Sekiryuutei who had powered up through them. As long as it was related to breasts, he would be able to create miracles, and defeat enemies regardless of how strong they

were. All of us, including himself agreed that he was the [Chichiryuutei Oppai Dragon]. That [Oppai Dragon] actually… couldn't recognise breasts? He couldn't even say it? Nor could he even see them!? Ise-kun's otou-san then said

"I've never even heard of this kind of illness! Having said that, aren't you able to see kaa-san's breasts? Moreover, you didn't have any abnormalities when you woke up."

Ise-kun looked at his okaa-san's breasts.

"Yes, I can see kaa-san's. But the nurse-san's is also blurry and I can't see it clearly…. At that time, because I had just woken up, I just thought that my vision was a little bit fuzzy…"

He answered. Indeed, his mother's presence was the strong. Ise-kun then turned his gaze towards Koneko-chan.

"The only one that I'm always able to see is Koneko-chan's…"

He said….

"You mean, my oppai are very small, right…?"

Koneko-chan looked down as she stared at Ise-kun. …It's very regrettable, but I think the probability of that is quite high. By my estimations…no, anyone could come to a conclusion as long as they understood Ise-kun; he was able to see his okaa-san's and Koneko-chan's breasts, but breasts aside from those — could not be seen. That should be the case. It was a condition which was unseen and unheard of, or perhaps it should be said that it really suited him…. Suddenly, Ise-kun clutched his head in pain.

"…Damn it, just thinking about that, my head hurts so much that if feels as if it's being stabbed!"

["—What!?"]

We were shocked by his words once again. How could that be…! Simply thinking about it would cause pain to such a degree!? Gasper-kun gave the item in his hands to Ise-kun. It was something that he had just bought from the hospital's convenience store…an erotic magazine.

"Senpai! This is senpai's favourite magazine, the latest issue of the Underworld's [Big Tits Go to Hell]!"

It was the adult magazine that Ise-kun had been buying from the Underworld to read. Under the gaze of Ise-kun's parents, he quickly flipped through it. But, halfway through, he clutched at his chest in pain.

"…Damn it…! It's so painful that it feels as if my body is going to die from being torn apart…it hurts so much! It's so horrifically painful, I can't even look at this magazine!"

The adult magazine that Ise-kun was so fond of was actually tossed onto the floor!

"This is an abnormal situation. Hurry up and call the attending doctor here."

Rias-zenbuchou was just about to press the call buzzer—.

"I've already called them."

A familiar voice came from the door. Everyone turned around to look, and saw the doctor, nurse, as well as Azazel-sensei. The doctor and nurse began to examine Ise-kun's condition, while Azazel-sensei quietly said to us

"The reason for the change that's occurred in Ise's body is the effect of Dragon Deification."

During the fight against Rizevim Livan Lucifer, Ise-kun and the unconscious Ophis had connected with each other, and he awakened the power of infinity. That power forced Rizevim, who was also known as a Super Devil, into a corner. However, his body immediately underwent changes after the fight, and hovered on the border of life and death… Even though he was able to survive because of the breast milk, Ise-kun's body was still suffering from the aftereffects of Dragon Deification… Sensei then said

"Ise can't see women's breasts, right? He can't even speak about them. Every time Ise causes a miracle, it's by borrowing the power of breasts. As a result, Ise himself has become an embodiment of breasts. Dragon Deification can be said to have been a power-up. Although it was only temporary, his body did indeed handle the power of infinity. If it was an ordinary Devil or Dragon, their body wouldn't be able to withstand it and they'd die within a few seconds. Ise was only able to defeat Rizevim because he had obtained Great Red's flesh. However, that is the limit. After having obtained the power of infinity, it would be most unusual if there

weren't any repercussions. I think it's roughly because you perceive women's breasts as your own spiritual food, thus therefore, this has resulted in a reverse impact, and it is now your poison. Well, since erotic magazines are so painful for you to look at, my guess doesn't seem too far off."

No one stepped forward to disagree with what Azazel-sensei said. Ophis' power of infinity — it was known as the absolute strongest power in this world; even if they temporarily held that power, any kind of existence would suffer from its aftereffects and consequences. It could be described as a miracle that Ise-kun was alive right now. However, being unable to see breasts was a question which transcended life and death for Ise-kun, right? That perverted Ise-kun actually…couldn't see any of the girls' breasts (except for Koneko-chan)! Rias-zenbuchou immediately asked sensei

"…Is this condition only temporary?"

"I'm also not sure about that. It could continue on like that forever, or perhaps it'll be better tomorrow. However, one thing is clear…its best if you don't continue to use the power of Dragon Deification. You could say that you've been able to survive this time, but I don't know about next time. If you naively think that you can simply use breast milk to help you recover from using Dragon Deification again, you may not just be unable to see breasts next time, even butts, and in the worst case, you may just die after seeing a woman's outline."

Upon hearing this information, Ise-kun shed tears of heartache.

"I won't be able to recognise girls!? I'll only be able to see a girl's outline and then die!? …T-That kind of thing…that kind of thing is far too painful! That's basically like death to me!"

Ise-kun burst into tears and wailed. This scene was incredibly painful…but, I couldn't say anything…. Huh? Was I the only one who felt this way…? No, it wasn't just me. Aside from me, there was also Azazel-sensei and the doctor with an uncertain expression, while everyone else had solemn expressions. The doctor had no idea where to begin. Sorry, this kind of Devils' illness is really quite non-existent…. Xenovia shouted

"Damn it! This isn't like Ise at all! If this continues, how will we make babies…!"

You don't need to say those kinds of things out loud, okay…. In

here, isn't it a hospital…? Although they have an obstetrics and gynaecology department here…this isn't the place to say such things…. Rias-zenbuchou placed the depressed Ise-kun's head into her chest.

"Ah, my poor Ise. …You haven't even touched my breasts yet…"

Rias-zenbuchou hugged him very gently. Regardless of whether it was me or Ise-kun, we would be cured. However—.

"Guwaaaaaaahhh!"

Ise-kun suddenly cried out in pain!

"…It hurts, Rias'…it hurts after I touched it! Although I'm very happy, I's so painful!"

The severe pain that he felt even caused him to distort his face! How could that be! Rias-zenbuchou…being embraced by his dearest beloved woman; simply touching her chest could trigger such a reaction!? Seeing Ise-kun's severe response, the nurse immediately stepped in between the two people.

"Please don't give the patient too much stimulation!"

The two people were separated. Rias-zenbuchou…her heart had truly taken a deep hit! She felt despair at the fact that she couldn't even embrace him. Just at that time—. The melody of a song suddenly resounded from the TV. This song was played to soothe restless children. That song reverberated throughout Ise-kun's room. —It was the Oppai Dragon song.

♪

Living in the edge of a certain country

There is an oppai-loving Dragon

♪

"…Ku! Uh…"

Ise-kun listened to the song about breasts which were now causing him pain.

♪

The Dragon goes for a walk whenever the weather is good to look for girls ☆

DRAGON DRAGON OPPAI DRAGON

GROPE-GROPE SUCK-SUCK PAFU-PAFU

♪

“…R-Rub…guah!”

Ise-kun lay down on his bed, as he was already beginning to struggle.

♪

There are so many types of oppai

But he likes the big ones the best

♪

“T-That’s right, I like big…big…aahhh!”

He clutched his head as his face cried out in pain!

♪

The Oppai Dragon also flies today

♪

In the edge of a certain town, the Oppai Dragon laughs

Even on a stormy day, the Oppai Dragon becomes happy by pressing oppai ☆

DRAGON DRAGON OPPAI DRAGON

CLICK-CLICK ZOOM-ZOOM IYAAAN

♪

“CLICK-CLICK ZOOM-ZOOM IYAAAAAAAN!”

Almost as if it were a nightmare, he let out miserable cries, and it even spread to other patients’ rooms. But his index finger was drawing a certain image in the air, and he wanted to continue.

♪

He has seen lots of oppai

But he likes big ones the best

The Oppai Dragon also presses today

♪

The Oppai Dragon song had already progressed to the third, and fourth version. Ise-kun's situation looked like it was becoming even worse.

♪

In the edge of the beach of a certain sea

There lives an oppai-loving Dragon

♪

When Gasper-kun saw his favourite senpai undergo such changes, he ran to Ise-kun's side and cried tearfully.

"Ise-senpai! Please jump up energetically like you always do! Isn't this the Oppai Dragon song!?"

"…Say, Gya-kun. Towards this song, Ise-senpai…and in this current situation."

Koneko-chan calmly said.

♪

The summer seaside is full of oppai and full of dreams ☆

DRAGON DRAGON OPPAI DRAGON

BOUNCE-BOUNCE JUMP-JUMP SWAY

♪

"Yes, seaside, bounce-bounce……jump-jump, sway…"

Ise-kun said that line with a weak voice. Perhaps he was remembering the times when he went to the pool or played at the seaside in summer. His mind had already entered a state of

delirium!

“It’s no good! Ise is shaking quite badly!”

Xenovia also looked on with an expression of dismay.

♪

The oppai in swimsuits are wonderful

But he likes the big ones the best

The Oppai Dragon also goes today

♪

Seeing a certain oppai

♪

Seeing Ise-kun who was groaning, Rias-zenbuchou and Akeno-san both cried as they held both of Ise-kun’s hands.

“Ise!”

“Ise-kun!”

Ise-kun glanced towards — the chests of those two. They were the oppai of the two great onee-samas that he loved, but—. He had said to me in the past

“Listen to me, Kiba. When the oppai of Rias and Akeno-san both appear before you at the same time, which side would you poke? Ehehe, if it was me, I would poke both sides at the same time. That is how I live my life—”

I suddenly recalled what he had told me in the past. But—.

♪

The Oppai Loving Dragon found big oppai and fell in love

♪

Ise-kun clutched his head and screamed out

“Guuuuuaaaahh! My head is going to split apart!”

Blood then gushed out from his nose, and white foam came out of his mouth!

♪

The oppai of the Switch-Princess are truly wonderful ☆

DRAGON DRAGON OPPAI DRAGON

BOUNCE-BOUNCE POKE-POKE SWAY

There are many oppai

♪

Ise-kun was still looking at the girls weakly. Finally, he turned his gaze towards the person he loved the most — Rias-zenbuchou's body.

♪

But he likes those of the Switch-Princess the most

♪

Ise-kun barely managed to make a smile — and then.

♪

The Oppai Dragon is also sleeps today

♪

With a 'don' sound, he collapsed onto his pillow.

"Ise!?"

"Ise-san!?"

"Ise-kun!?"

Ise-sama! Hold on!"

Everyone had panicked upon seeing Ise-kun faint. The nurse-san hastily prepared the life-support devices for Ise-kun.

♪

There are many oppai

But he likes those of the Switch-Princess the most

The Oppai Dragon also flies today

♪

The fourth verse of the song was finally over, and Ise-kun's parents also switched off the TV—. It seems like the [Oppai Dragon Song] could be described as the most potent poison for Ise-kun right now…. On that day, Ise-kun lost the thing that was most important to him, and lost the value of his own existence—.

Part 2

It was two hours later that Ise-kun regained consciousness.

He had already calmed down, received Asia's healing, drank Phoenix Tears, and he could already sit with his upper body up again. Azazel-sensei began to explain and summarise the changes that Ise-kun had undergone.

"—In short, this is what the situation is like right now. The power of the Dragon God, you are not allowed to use that again."

Sensei then said a few more things

"Having said that though, Balance Breakers are an impossible phenomenon. The God of the Bible no longer exists, and coupled with the actions of the Hero Faction, Balance Breakers have continually been appearing recently. In the long history of humanity, the number of people who could use Balance Breakers was very small."

That's right, Balance Breakers were extremely rare phenomena. However, the number of them had risen greatly this past year. Perhaps the reason for it was because the conditions for it to be achieved were leaked out from the Hero Faction. Moreover, the God of the Bible no longer existed, thus there was no one to control the Sacred Gear System, and that became one of the reasons. My holy-demonic sword was also an impossible product. Moreover, in

addition to subspecies Balance Breakers, many similar situations arose among our enemies. Especially Ise-kun and Vali, those Two Heavenly Dragons had attained unparalleled growth. Azazel-sensei continued on with this topic

“Under such conditions, Ise’s and Vali’s Balance Breakers have undergone completely new changes, which could be described as a form of growth. The originally chosen pathway to increase your strength was a relatively safe and low risk method…. But in such a short period of time, both you and Vali have increased your strength extraordinarily; I’m currently reflecting on this. Attaining a Balance Breaker allowed you to increase your strength. [Balance Breaker] — that can be abbreviated as BxB. That being the case, the power-up of your crimson armour [Cardinal Crimson] — that would be CxC, and the [Diabolos Dragon] obtained through Dragon Deification — that would be DxD. Basically, you’ve enhanced your strength excessively in a short amount of time. Furthermore, this isn’t just a simple two-stage increase; rather, it’s a five-stage or ten-stage evolution. …It’s natural that your body isn’t able to keep up.”

No one was able to say anything in response to this. Regardless of whom, everyone felt truly happy at the fact that Ise-kun’s strength had increased, and it encouraged themselves. On the contrary, they had also recognised that he had become too strong in too short an amount of time. Especially his power-up through the power of infinity…the burden on his body was extraordinarily heavy. Sensei — he faced Ise-kun’s parents and deeply lowered his head.

“…Ise, he…your son, it’s all my fault that he’s become the way that he is now. It was all because I was too interested, and too proud in his ability, and power; I made too many unreasonable demands of him in too short an amount of time. In order to live up to my expectations, he’s endured all kinds of difficulties…however, bearing the burden of this was indeed too much for a seventeen year old child. This is also — my fault.”

Azazel-sensei’s words were more sincere than anything he had said in the past, it encapsulated his inner regret and guilt. Ise-kun’s parents frantically waved their hands with exaggerated motions towards sensei’s behaviour which was different from what it had been in the past.

“H-Hold on, sensei! Please don’t be like this! I don’t mind this at all! Because, I wouldn’t have been able to become stronger if not for sensei!”

“But, Ise. It was my fault that those you loved the most were taken away.”

“Even so, that was something that couldn’t be helped. …Although that dealt a heavy, and serious blow to me. Although it was very serious…”

Ise-kun looked around at everyone, and smiled.

“Thanks to this, we are all alive. Precisely because I had sensei’s guidance, I was able to obtain the power to save everyone. I also agree that I’ve overworked myself in such a short amount of time, but, if I didn’t achieve the growth that I have now, I would have lost any one of the people here. So that I don’t lose anyone, I think — it’s worth it even if I lose an arm or a leg.”

After hearing Ise-kun’s assertion, Ise-kun’s parents responded to Azazel-sensei. Ise-kun’s otou-san spoke first.

“Sensei, please raise your head. My son has already grown to be able to say something so respectable. That’s already enough for me. You’ve raised Ise into a man, sensei. As a father, I’m very grateful to you.”

Ise’s okaa-san then said

“…Seeing my son’s body, I was also shocked. I didn’t even know when he began to have such muscles…I already understand just how much effort Ise has expended for everyone here. As a mother, I don’t want him to be involved in any more troubles…but, my son, who has he saved? As parents, we are very proud. I’m also grateful to Azazel-sensei who was able to guide Ise into this.”

Azazel-sensei lifted his head, and sincerely looked at Ise-kun’s parents.

“The son of you two is a valuable asset of the Underworld. Because of this, I won’t allow Ise to become endangered again.”

Azazel-sensei brushed Ise-kun’s head.

“Leave the rest to us. I also…we of the higher-ups will be going out to the frontlines as well this time. So, you should rest well right now. …Even if I say this, you’ll still charge out…. But, you need to promise me something.”

Sensei looked seriously at Ise-kun as he said

“The power of Dragon Deification, you are not allowed to use it again. …I’ll allow you to use the BxB and CxC that I just spoke about…but you can’t endanger yourself, do you understand?”

Ise-kun carefully nodded. He then asked a question.

“…Sensei, would it be possible for me to have growth like AxA or ExE?”

“This I do not know. If you are determined to seek such a pathway to enhance your strength, it may be possible in the future…in short, I’ll allow you to use Balance Breaker and Cardinal Crimson, but definitely not Dragon Deification.”

After sensei said that, Ise-kun was left to the attending doctor, nurse and his parents. Azazel-sensei said

“I have something to do, so I’ll say goodbye first.”

He bowed his head to Ise-kun’s parents again, and then planned to leave—.

“Rias, Akeno, Kiba, Gasper, Rossweisse, come with me for a little bit.”

He called me, Rias-zenbuchou, Akeno-san, Gasper-kun, and Rossweisse-san over, while the others stayed behind to talk with Ise-kun. We followed sensei to leave the patient room, and arrived at the rest area which was on the same level. And over there — a man wearing a black jacket, Ikuse Tobio-san, as well as several other people that we had never met before stood there. Ikuse-san said to Azazel-sensei

“Everyone is present now.”

“I know, Tobio. Calling you all over so urgently, I’m sorry.”

“No, we also want head out to the frontlines together with [DxD]. Although it’s only a modest amount of strength, let us also do our best to help.”

Ikuse-san replied. Sensei then turned to us and said

“Rias, and all of you. My Slash Dog team will also be coming out to the frontlines from behind the scenes this time. Afterwards, we will

discuss the things about our joint force.”

What exciting news! The major people of the Grigori were finally going to have an official debut on the stage! This was an unprecedented large-scale battle, so it was also imperative that they would also be joining the fight. It was currently a situation where we wouldn’t mind having too many people if another strong person joined. —At that time, Akeno-san noticed a certain person and became surprised. Following where Akeno-san was looking, there stood a beauty who was around twenty years old and looked rather similar to Akeno-san. She also had beautiful, black, flowing long hair. The beauty smiled at Akeno-san.

“—Akeno.”

Tears quickly began to stream down Akeno-san’s face, and she then jumped over to hug her.

“—Uh! Suzaku-anesama!”

The woman who was called Suzaku lovingly stroked Akeno-san’s head.

“I didn’t see you for some time and was worried about you, it’s good that you’re healthy more than anything else.”

“Me too, I’m sorry for not getting in touch with you.”

“Now, there’s no need to apologise. Considering your position, this is something that can’t be helped.”

—Suzaku. I was familiar with this name. It was the name of the Himejima Clan’s — current head of the family. She was related by blood to Akeno-san, Akeno-san’s okaa-san ‘Shuri’-san and the head of the family’s mother were sisters, and hence these two people were cousins. Upon seeing the current head of the Himejima family here, Rias-zenbuchou smiled as she greeted her.

“Long time no see, Suzaku.”

“Yes, Rias-san. I just had to silence the fussy people in my family a bit. This time I will also work together with Tobio, you and the others.”

As the head of the Himejima family, she had a reason for being acquainted with Ikuse-san. Ikuse-san’s family also belonged to the

Himejima family, and had the same bloodline as the Himejima family. Like Akeno-san, he was a second cousin of the current family head. Due to Akeno-san's circumstances, the Himejima family and the Grigori had a grudge against each other, but most recently…after the head of the family changed, there were significant changes internally, and lately, both sides had softened against each other. Now that both of these cousins could embrace each other, it was the best evidence of that softening. Hearing those words from Suzaku-san as the current head of the family, Rias-zenbuchou continued to ask

"So?"

"As the current head of the Himejima family, I would naturally participate in this battle. The other four families will also send specialists to this battle, joining me on the frontlines."

The other four families — since ancient times, Japan had a group which guarded those with supernatural abilities, they were the — Nakiri clan, Himejima clan, Shinra clan, Kushihashi clan, and Doumon clan. These five clans — were known as the Five Great Families. The Five Great Families which evaded the supernatural until now, were entering the war this time…. This was also thanks to Suzaku-san's persuasion, and they had also witnessed the destruction of Trihexa and recognised the threat that it posed. Although I had mixed feelings, I felt happy about the fact that our combat strength had increased. Another group then approached. — It was the Vali team. After witnessing Rizevim's demise, he also joined us on the frontlines in the Norse World. He and his team also fought courageously in the fierce battle against the army of Evil Dragons. For now, Vali was currently counted as the adopted son of the chief god Odin, and was also a student who had been taught by Azazel-sensei. It was impossible for him not to join the battle. However, while he was originally a battle maniac, it was a positive thing that he joyfully went to battle. But after the defensive battle ended, he had disappeared…. Having reappeared, Vali revealed a fearless smile when he saw Ikuse-san.

"—Tobio, so you also have to come out and show your face huh."

"Vali, is your revenge finally over?"

In response to Ikuse-san, Vali simply raised the edge of his mouth slightly. Ikuse-san continued to speak to Vali

“This time, our team will also be on the frontlines. But, we’ve been given the order to supress Trihexa’s damage. We’ll be assisting you, and also going on a rampage.”

Hearing this, Vali laughed heartily.

“It’s really been a long time since I’ve seen your true ability, hasn’t it? Ho, the situation has already reached this point. I originally wanted to see that again when I fought against you again…”

Vali still spoke in a haughty manner as usual. Ikuse-san seemed slightly embarrassed as he scratched his cheek, and made a slight smile.

“Hahaha, you still haven’t changed that habit of yours. —Indeed, you’ll head out to the battlefield here. Please.”

While saying that, he looked behind Ikuse-san. After seeing the person behind him, Vali’s expression changed.

“—What! …I didn’t think that you’d actually bring her along too…?”

There was a girl wearing a hood, and she took off her hood as she stepped out from the Slash Dog team. It was a blonde-haired witch. Her hair was long and flowing, and her eyes were sapphire blue. She seemed around twenty years old, and looked like a great beauty. While the witch approached Vali, she revealed a soft smile.

“Were you saying some selfish things again?”

I looked over at Vali…he actually seemed to be retreating as he scratched his cheek. That Vali actually was actually shaken by seeing the appearance of that woman.

“……Uh!! Lavinia…you!”

The witch who was addressed as Lavinia by Vali, held up Vali’s hand.

“Mephisto-kaichou and Former Governor Azazel have consented to allow me on the frontlines, which is why I’ve come out. Now we can fight together again, Va-kun.”

—Va-kun. Someone able to address Vali like that must be someone he was close with. …I see, Vali knew her. Vali’s usual calm and

handsome aura was missing, he simply stood there with a bewildered expression as he looked embarassed.

“I, no, it’s problematic!”

Hearing Vali reply, the woman called Lavinia displayed a sad expression.

“Va-kun…you betrayed the Grigori, went to find your grandfather alone, and gave many people a lot of trouble. This can’t do you know. You need to fight together with everyone this time. —Be good, okay?”

Lavinia then moved towards Vali’s chest, and gave him a big hug. I did not expect that this battle maniac who didn’t even have a speck of interest in women would now actually be standing there without resistance, and even with a flustered face trying his best.

“…Uh, ku!”

Seeing Vali like this, even Rias-zenbuchou was so surprised that her mouth was wide open. …The ones who clearly understood their situation, Azazel-sensei and the Slash Dog team, grinned as they watched the interaction between those two people.

“As Lucifer and a Dragon, it can simply be abbreviated as Lucidrago, you still haven’t gotten rid of those habits.”

“But, it’s nice that it suits Va-kun’s style.”

The men and women of the Slash Dog team casually teased. The Vali team also watched his strange behaviour. They all seemed to be enjoying their captain’s unexpected behaviour.

“She’s truly the one person that my captain can’t lift his head against nya”

“As soon as he notices the [Ice Princess]’s aura, he’ll run away. He was careless this time, and the [Ice Princess] herself had also completely erased her presence so Vali couldn’t detect it. Kakaka!”

It looked like Kuroka and Bikou also knew Lavinia. Ikuse-san explained to us

“She’s called Lavinia Reni. She’s a witch of [Grauzauberer] — the most highly regarded subordinate of Mephisto Pheles-kaichou. Both

Vali and I are the same, we're quite fearful of her. She's roughly equivalent to Vali's ane[6], if saying that makes it somewhat easier to understand."

Rias-zenbuchou understood.

"…[Longinus], the possessor of [Absolute Demise][7]. [Ice Princess Lavinia], it's also the first time I've seen her…"

I had also only heard of the name but never met the person. She belonged to the magician organisation of [Grauzauberer] and was known as the strongest [Ice Princess Lavinia]—. She was one of the possessors of a Longinus, [Absolute Demise]. However, it was news to me that she was connected to the Slash Dog team…. It was the first time that I had found out about Vali's weakness. Kuroka and Le Fay quietly asked me

("By the way, is Sekiryuutei-chan okay?")

("We found out about some news in here…I'm also quite worried…. I originally wanted to rush over here…but I couldn't just rush over here in the middle of a battle…I'm really sorry.")

Both of them had once been under the care of the Hyoudou household. They were also good friends with Ise-kun and got along well with him. They were constantly worried about Ise-kun.

("Yeah, well, right now his life is not in danger. I'll tell you the details about it later.")

After hearing my reply, both of them heaved a sigh of relief. …For a matter such as receiving damage when the topic was about breasts, it was rather difficult to explain in words, but they would immediately understand if Kuroka went to give Ise-kun a hug…. But in that case, Ise-kun would have to suffer again. Azazel-sensei looked at us who were gathered here and began to speak.

"The current situation is critical, so I'm asking for your help this time. It's not only the Underworld, but this time, every mythology is being threatened. That's how immense their malice is. Although you've had some disagreements between each other in the past, if you don't cooperate well this time, we won't be left with anything good. Compared with the crisis of the end of the world, anyone's pride is nothing in comparison."

Sensei then said to Rossweisse-san and Gasper-kun

“Rossweisse, Gasper, I’ve obtained some new information about the Holy Grail. In order to defeat Trihexa, I’ll need your opinions and assistance. After this, could you come with me briefly?”

Both of them didn’t say anything, but nodded firmly.

“As for everyone else, please go to the Maou’s city and stand by. If anything happens—”

Sensei didn’t finish his sentence. A man wearing a suit came running over through the corridor, it was someone employed by the Devils’ side. Since he was actually running in a hospital, it seemed like the situation wasn’t a trivial matter. In fact, that person’s face also looked pale. He stood in front of sensei, and then relayed the message to him

“Trihexa and the army of Evil Dragons have made a move again.”

[“—What!”]

Everyone was surprised! …They had actually made a move again…! Everyone immediately changed their mindset, and showed courageous expressions. Rias-zenbuchou asked the man

“Where did they show up this time!?”

“…That…is Mount Olympus—”

Olympus — that was the territory of the Greek mythology! That is to say, after the Norse mythology, it was the Greek mythology! After listening to that, everyone prepared to set out. Rias-zenbuchou made a declaration towards everyone

“Then, we’ll go there! Everyone, we’re going—”

However, the man’s report hadn’t finished—.

“It’s not just that. …At the same time, at the foot of Mount Meru[8], the territories of the Egyptian and Celtic mythologies, Trihexa has also appeared!”

…….

…There wasn’t just one place…? Aside from Olympus, it had also appeared at Meru Mountain, and the worlds of the Egyptian and Celtic mythologies…?

“What’s going on here…?”

The unimaginable events caused Rias-zenbuchou to frown. She couldn’t help asking further. …But, Azazel-sensei seemed to realise something, and his expression immediately turned grim. The man continued

“Trihexa split itself into several bodies, and sent itself to the territories of various factions, that’s what has happened!”

[“—What!”]

Everyone was shocked again, and were left speechless. …It split… its body…into several parts? That is to say, Trihexa split its body up, and then attacked different factions simultaneously…? Azazel-sensei said with a bitter expression

“…It should be as he reported. That beast divided its body, and attacked different places at the same time.”

“…Does that mean that since it has several heads, it can split itself into several bodies…?”

Rias-zenbuchou accidentally let out her surprise on the situation of the battle. While we were fighting in the Norse World, we had already witnessed Trihexa’s unimaginable combat strength. Despite taking on our all-out attacks, and attacks from god class beings, Trihexa appeared to be completely unharmed. Even if its exterior was burnt, and its flesh was gouged out, it was able to regenerate in an instant. On the other hand, its flaming breath which was outrageously strong and large came towards us. The earth was split, mountains were destroyed, and our side received tragic losses. Just one hit was enough to change the shape of the environment—. It was this beast which had now even split itself into several parts! Several beasts like that were now attacking simultaneously…! However, if splitting also distributed its strength…. It wasn’t possible to think like that, even if that was the case, there were a massive number of mass-produced Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei everywhere. We couldn’t carelessly underestimate the enemy. Akeno-san said to Rias-zenbuchou

“In this case, we’ll also need the combat strength of the members who are currently supressing the unrest in the Underworld.”

“Where are Sona, Sairaorg and the others right now? It would be best if we could contact them now.”

The Sitri peerage, Bael peerage, and Agares peerage were currently all suppressing the riots which had broken out throughout the Underworld. But, the current situation could only be left to the local police and military. We needed to immediately rush over to where Trihexa was. While we were thinking about that, the man who had reported to us received new information. He too was surprised by the new information

“—Tsk! They actually…”

He immediately conveyed the new information to us.

“The Bael and Sitri peerages are both currently in the capital city of the Bael territory. …The Bael’s city is currently under attack from rebels!”

—The situation had rapidly deteriorated! Yes, what we Devils always had to face was embedded within our own depths, that which was filled with chaos and darkness—.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ Normal milk from a cow.
2. ↑ Same as above.
3. ↑ Oji-san and oba-san: father and mother respectively.
4. ↑ Ogifu-sama and ogibo-sama: father-in-law and mother-in-law respectively.
5. ↑ Oppai, chichi, and mune are all words which mean breasts.
6. ↑ Ane: elder sister.
7. ↑ Kanji was [Eternal Ice Princess], kana was [Absolute Demise].
8. ↑ Mount Meru is the home of Brahma and the demi-gods in Hindu mythology.

Life.Ba'al Lion of the Great King —Great King—

Part 1

Since when did this start—.

I felt pain at the sight of this Bael castle—.

The second son of the current head of the House of Bael — Magdaran Bael and his guards were currently moving through the passageway of the castle which was in uproar. Approximately twenty minutes earlier, this Bael castle was attacked by rebels. As a countermeasure against Trihexa, all of the Great King side were in the middle of discussions with the local politicians. Under any circumstances, the castle of the Bael city was second to none amongst the various other territories, the reason for that was because it had more than fifty layers of barriers cast over it. Let alone saying that it wouldn't be compromised, this robust castle boasted about the fact that it had never been compromised before, even during the battle against the old government. —However, this castle was now facing a crisis. The castle had received attacks which passed through the barriers. Looking out from the windows of the passageways, it was possible to see the guards engaging in combat with the insurgents. The guards were slaughtered one after the other by the techniques which were released by the masked insurgents. The elite guards of Bael were powerless, and that clearly demonstrated how deadly these rebels were. Magdaran also saw how the bright flowers which were planted in the courtyard had withered.

…What was their reason for targeting Bael? …Simply by thinking about it, the reasons became quite clear. But, if he had to speak of a recent case of resentment, it should be about the criticism of the [King] piece, and the complaints of misconduct in the Rating Games. Magdaran left aside the former for the time being, as he had more or less realised the latter. However, he himself did not participate in the Games, so even if there was misconduct in the Games, he could carry on without any issues, which is why he didn't see it as a problem. It had also been concealed quite well

from the citizens, which is why he didn't think that such behaviour would result in any disadvantages. —But he had never imagined that it would actually be the Champion himself who would denounce this truth. At the corner of the corridor ahead of him appeared someone who released a strange aura, and was wearing jet-black armour. Magdaran Bael's guards all gathered together from the surrounding area to protect him…Magdaran seemed to recognise the person who was clad in armour, and gestured for the guards to stop.

"…It's one of Sona-dono's peerage."

That was correct, Magdaran received such information. Within Sona Sitri's peerage was a former-human [Pawn] who was clad in jet-black armour. Sona Sitri's [Pawn] — Saji Genshirou, released his helmet and exposed his face.

"So you're Master Sairaorg's …the next head of the family's ototo[1], right? I'm a [Pawn] of Sona Sitri's peerage. I came to help out."

From the looks of it, it was for ani[2] — one of the members of [DxD] who fought together with Sairaorg; he had rushed over to the city of Bael to help with supressing the rebellion.

"…[DxD] huh. I never imagined that I would receive help from them."

From his own standpoint, he couldn't help feeling a sense of irony. Hearing such a reply, Saji tilted his head, and a question mark floated up above his head…. Magdaran said

"It is indeed a great help."

They then planned to leave Bael city, with Saji in the lead. In order to pacify the civilians and supress the rebellion across the whole territory, Magdaran's own peerage had gone out, and the Bael castle was left with just his [Queen]. And now, that [Queen] had also gone out to ensure that they had a safe escape route. In order to discuss the countermeasures against Trihexa, chichi[3] had left to meet the first generation's Zekram Bael, who lived in seclusion. Haha[4] had left here early two days ago to seek refuge. The next Head of the House — ani Sairaorg had left the territory as a member of the anti-terrorist team. In other words, this Bael castle didn't have its Lord, or the next heir, all that was here was the second son. The Great King side that was respected by the current

Maous, even the Lord's castle was now empty…. Magdaran made a sarcastic smile.

Indeed, that's how chichi was. Whenever a decision had to be made, he would rush over to the place where the previous generation and first generation had secluded themselves, and then ask for their advice. Regardless of whether it was a political affair or family affair, he had never made a single decision on his own. Hence, as long as he protected his pride and appearance, even his wife and children could be discarded without hesitation. Because he had not inherited the power of destruction, his half-brother had once been abandoned in the outskirts of the Bael territory. The second son Magdaran had been born with the power of destruction, hence Sairaorg was banished and he was selected as the next heir early on. Magdaran, who was brought up with the identity of being the next family head, had been strictly educated ever since he was young. Magdaran's combat strength couldn't be said to very high, but since he had inherited the power of destruction, he didn't have to train too hard. There were actually people with an even stronger power of destruction who were born in a family outside of the House of Bael, thus Magdaran was always compared to the Gremory siblings. Having always lived under a strict educational environment, Magdaran despised Sirzechs and Rias. It was not long afterwards that he found out what the Heads of the House were thinking.

Then, one day, his world changed. His half-brother Sairaorg returned from the outskirts, and declared that he desired the position of being the next Head of the House. The current head, chichi, and the first generation head laughed at Sairaorg. A Bael who didn't possess the power of destruction trying to say that was nonsense. The current head originally wanted to cast aside ani's words as a joke, but he decided to use this as an opportunity to truly sever their parent-child relationship, and he ordered Magdaran to be his opponent. A few minutes after the beginning of the contest to become the next Head of the House — it was ani's overwhelming victory. Lying on the ground was Magdaran, who had inherited the power of destruction. Magdaran was powerless, the speed and power of his ani who had trained his body exceeded all expectations, and completely disregarded Magdaran's power of destruction. Chichi, the current Head of the House also looked at Magdaran who was lying on the ground, but with a gaze that seemed as though he was looking at a pile of rubbish. Ever since then, a strange life began in the Bael castle—.

The Bael family members who lived within the castle only consisted of four people: chichi as the current Head of the House, his second wife who was Magdaran's haha, his ani Sairaorg who was the next Head of the House, and the second son who had the position of the next Head of the House taken away from him, Magdaran. Regardless of whether it was during meals, or other things, there were only these four people. As the current head, his chihci was reluctant to acknowledge the eldest son, and constantly asked the previous generation and first generation for advice on the decision; the haha, whose son had the position of the next Head of the House taken away from him held a bitter grudge, and did not conceal her dissatisfaction of living together with the eldest son. Magdaran had received the education for becoming the next head, so he had to assist his ani who had taken away his position. Every time they sat down for a meal, there was no conversation as they ate in silence. Haha withdrew early each time. Haha felt despair at her husband and child, and hatred towards Sairaorg, but still did not let go of her position as the Bael wife. Naturally, aside from government affairs, only Magdaran's peerage would talk with him. His chichi and haha would not talk to him at home. No, thinking back about it, ever since he began to be brought up as the next Head of the House, he had never received the love that a child should have. At best he was seen as the 'Next Great King of Bael', and sensibly continued. …He attended the meetings between the children of other nobles, and one of their sons said to Magdaran

—It was really comfortable when my mother cleaned out my ears.

Ear cleaning—. Magdaran had never received anything other than a maid since his brith. There were some children who had gone with their families to have fun at the beaches of the human world. Aside from inspecting the Bael territory, Magdaran had never gone on a trip outside of Bael territory. Let alone having a holiday together with his family—. Family…in the end, what were family for? This castle was the residence of those who had the blood of Bael flowing through them…this family. And the Bael who lived here…should also be called 'family' members. In the end, what was he himself? He was born as the second son, and also raised as the next Head of the House. That was then taken away, and he was left alone to be treated as someone who didn't exist… It felt more and more painful. He no longer understood the meaning of his own life — he didn't know his own fate, and hated this Bael castle. At some point unknown to him, there was only one blood relative who would talk with him, and that was his half-brother Sairaorg.

“How have you been recently?”

“Speaking of which, this has become quite popular within our territory—”

“There’s a man called Hyoudou Issei in Team [DxD], he’s very interesting—”

Towards all of these things that brother said, Magdaran could only reply stiffly with ‘I see’, ‘Yes’, ‘oh’. Magdaran acknowledged that his brother was strong, so ridiculously strong that he didn’t even think about trying to regain the position of next head. As he was educated as a Bael, he didn’t know anything outside of the Bael lifestyle—. The only area where he stood out more than others was his detailed knowledge and understanding of plants. Since he was young, Magdaran was particularly fond of plants and flowers. Beautiful purple flowers bloomed throughout the Bael city. Those flowers were also planted in the courtyard. They had become extinct once before during the war between the Three Factions. Through an investigation, Magdaran discovered seeds which were preserved in good condition, and used modern techniques to revive them. Everyone in the Bael family had purple eyes. Hence, purple was also regarded as their family colour. Magdaran didn’t think that there was anything more suitable than to include this flower in the Bael emblem. In addition to that, he cultivated a rare type of apple. Magdaran continued with his research on plants. It wouldn’t be surprising if many of Magdaran’s investigations received commendation, however, what he received was a warning to mind his own deeds from the current head of the Great King House. The Great King House was symbolised by destruction, so the proposal of plant research was simply shameful. Haha had also never praised him. She had never once tried the apples which he had grown. The only one who was willing to listen was — his ani Sairaorg. Sairaorg sent the flowers and fruits that Magdaran had grown to places within Bael territory to sell. While cheerily eating the apples which his ototo had grown, ani said

“Apples are a specialty within the Bael territory. The apples that you’ve grown could even become the best in the Underworld. I think you can definitely do it. If you need to ask why, this apple truly is delicious.”

Magdaran shook his head and cleared away the memories of his conversations with his ani, and continued to move through the passageways. …Until today, whether it was ani or family, whether

it was flowers or the power of destruction, he didn't need bother himself with those things. If Trihexa destroyed the Underworld, he could do nothing but obediently accept that fate. It had already been a few minutes since he began moving through the castle, and Saji Genshirou saw the rear gate that he had come in through. Beyond that rear gate was a vast open space; the ceiling was very high, it should be a place for civilians who sought temporary refuge. The rear gate was in front of them, but Saji Genshirou who was at the front released his aura and took up a stance in front of the doorway. —There was an ominous atmosphere ahead. Looking carefully, there was already someone standing on the other side of the rear gate—. In front of him, lay someone that Magdaran was familiar with. A gray-haired man wearing a cloak and light armour was lying in a pool of blood. It was Magdaran's [Queen], Sectaas Barbatos[5]. He originated from the House of Barbatos which belonged to the Seventy Two Pillars, and was also Magdaran's servant. Having been born from a High-Class Devil and at the same time as Magdaran's [Queen], he had actually collapsed in a pool of blood….

"Sectaas! Are you okay!?"

Hearing Magdaran's voice, his [Queen] coughed up fresh blood from his mouth, yet he still prioritised his master's life as he said

"…Please hurry and get away."

Saji extended out one of the tentacles from his armour towards Sectaas. He then used the tentacle to wrap around Sectaas, and carried him back over immediately. Magdaran and the guards checked on the [Queen]'s injuries. His entire upper and lower body had been pierced by shots of demonic energy, and if this continued, he would die of blood loss. Despite it being utterly inadequate, Magdaran tore his clothing, and bandaged Sectaas' body with it. A person beyond the gate applauded upon seeing that.

"Truly praiseworthy. It's hard to imagine that the Great King would display such behaviour."

The sound of thudding footsteps approached from the side beyond the rear gate as they entered. It was a blonde-haired gentlemen who had a nobleman's attire. From his facial features, he appeared to be around thirty years old…but Devils were able to change their appearance, so the age that their appearance gave off wasn't always accurate. —Indeed, everyone who was present clearly knew who

this man was. Naturally, that was because this man had appeared on television—. The gentleman wearing a noble's attire bowed politely, and said a greeting.

"—Good day."

Magdaran said that man's name.

"…Ranked third in the Rating Games…Bedeze Abaddon-dono."

That's right, this man — a professional Rating Game player, and ranked third, Bedeze Abaddon. He was an Extra Demon from the House of Abaddon. He was also the mastermind behind the attack on this Bael castle. The ominous aura and killing intent that seeped out of his body could clearly be felt. Bedeze laughed pleasantly.

"This wouldn't be the current head's…second son-dono, would it? I would like to see the current head and previous generations, could you introduce them to me?"

"Unfortunately, chichiue[6] and the previous generations are not here. And there's also no reason for a traitor to meet with the Bael Great King."

Bedeze made an amused smile in reponse to Magdaran's words.

Honestly speaking, even with the [Pawn] of Sona Sitri's peerage here, it would be impossible to defeat the Rating Game's third-ranked [King] in front of us. All of the [Kings] in the Top Ten are Ultimate-Class Devils, and the top three are considered to be Maou-Class in terms of strength.

In other words, it would be like Magdaran, Saji and the guards fighting against a Maou. It was simply exasperating. Magdaran asked Bedeze

"Could you tell me your purpose in coming here?"

"I have had a number of exchanges with Great King in the past. Diehauser has exposed everything, and I want to show the darkness of that in front of all of the citizens."

Magdaran couldn't help but sigh at what was said. Magdaran quietly asked Saji beside him

("The other peerage members, and the members of the team, where

are they?")

("We of the Sitri peerage were all fighting against those masked people outside…each of them were strong as well, so I think they're members of the third-ranker's peerage.")

So that's how it was, loud roaring sounds had been heard from the outside since before, and that was probably the sounds of the battle between the Sitri peerage and the Abaddon peerage members. Saji continued

("Sairaorg and his peerage will also arrive here soon…")

It seems that ani Sairaorg had also been contacted. But, would he make it…? Nevertheless, even if he was able to get here in time, no matter how strong ani was, fighting against a Maou-Class opponent was too….

Bedeze paid no mind to any of that, and asked Saji

"The one on that side is from Sona Sitri's peerage, right? Your black aura, I remember it from the video recording of that match between the youths. As Serafall's imouto-kun[7], that Sona really wants to… build a school that anyone can attend in the Underworld, and even struggled for it, right? Bael's next head also cooperated with it. Hmm…can I ask a question, will she compete in the Games in the future?"

"Yes, because that is my master's dream. In order to establish a Rating Game school, she needs to obtain merit in her Rating Game performance to some extent, otherwise she would lack credibility. We'll definitely take the top spot."

Bedeze placed his hand on his chin as he nodded, and then said

"I see, that makes sense, strategy and tactics are important to some extent. But, wanting to reach the position of Champion is impossible. More accurately, it would be impossible to even reach the Top Five. So it would be best not to get one's hopes up too high."

"…Why do you say that?"

Bedeze answered Saji's question

"Because…I have first-hand experience with it. Listen well, you

definitely need to remember what I say. Regardless of the era, the person who becomes Champion is someone possesses an extremely abnormal and absolute power. If I had to speak of your generation…I think, Rias Gremory who has the Sekiryuutei would be the closest. But, regardless of who it is among the Rookies Four, they're all far inferior to that monster. —Diehauser Belial is a monster of that degree. Ordinary people absolutely cannot touch him. But, that is something which can't be helped. Regardless of the era, one or two people as strong as that will appear. It's like Sirzechs-sama, or perhaps Ajuka-sama. Thus, in order to approach those people who could be described as an embodiment of talent, a certain means is necessary."

"…So, that's why you used the [King] piece?"

Magdaran asked.

A few days ago, Diehauser Belial exposed the users of the [King] piece — one of them was Bedeze Abaddon. Moreover, even the second rank Roygun Belphegor used it. Bedeze had no remorse towards any of it, and his lips even curled upwards.

"That's right, it's exactly as you've said. I have status and power, all that I lacked was the talent to become an Ultimate-Class Devil. For that reason, I obtained it. I then became third-ranked in the Rating Games. I finally gained honour. By using an illegitimate means? But, the matches between top rankers was carried out with a balance. Aside from Diehauser, the wins and losses of other people was a balance. Of course, there were also many matches that weren't supervised officially. …However, I also don't deny that I knew those players had certain agreements on the matches."

Saji Gensjirou had an expression of disbelief etched onto his face. His master's dream was to build a Rating Game school that anyone could attend as equals. However, he had personally found out about the inside dealings of the Games; the third ranked player also nonchalantly competed in false matches, so it was a serious blow to him. Unlike the misconduct of the Games, things such as 'Compromising on the outcome of matches for the relationship between Houses' also existed. Such things had taken place — Riser Phoenix, who was connected to Team [DxD] had done it in the past. And they also knew that. The nature of these exchanges which happened between nobles was completely different to what Bedeze had said, and the ordinary citizens of the Underworld also knew. Even when Low-Class and Middle-Class Devils criticised it, they still

continued in order to retain an aristocratic society. Riser had also intentionally lost matches for the sake of his family twice. In human terms, it was similar to the so-called 'business golf'[8]. For Magdaran, who was completely uninterested in the Games and had absolutely no intention of participating, regardless of whether it was one of the secret 'agreements' that Bedeze spoke of or one of the 'entertainments' between nobles that even the general public knew of, honestly speaking, all of them were tinged with darkness and sin. Even if Saji Genshirou or the citizens continued to lament about it, the Games themselves were originally intended to be international activities which were free from political constraints, but as long as the committee comprised of members of an aristocratic society, it would be completely impossible. That was why the current Rating Games had such darkness. The old Devils took action for their own benefit; they believed that it had value which could be of use to them, hence they snatched the rights for it away from the Maou Ajuka Beelzebub. Magdaran asked Bedeze

"The public has already accepted the [King] piece, so why does it not protect the safety of Great King?"

Bedeze sneered.

"Because my fans also came to ask me. Under the present circumstances, since it's difficult to conceal the truth of the misconduct, I just have to overturn the source of the misconduct. — So, by removing the heads of Great King, I'll assert to the civilians that I disposed of the culprit behind this incident."

Bedeze's eyes seemed to give off the feeling of someone who was drowned in greed. Bedeze shook his head, and spoke with a sorrowful expression

"Civilians are stupid. As long as I sob and tell them I was being exploited by the Great King side, and that I take down the heads of the House of Bael in order to rid myself of those troubles, they'll certainly feel surprised, and I'll then get their support. They absolutely hate scandals involving those in the upper-class, so they'll be happier than anything to hear about the disgrace of nobles. Especially if the Great King faction which is politically opposed to the Maou side has a scandal like this, some politicians will appear to be apologetic on the surface, so the audience will simply compliment my actions."

As long as he could protect his own honour, he was willing to

fabricate this so-called 'justice' to manipulate public opinion and project himself as an ally of justice. With his hands stained by misconduct, the method that this man came up with was extremely simple — Magdaran was greatly surprised by the sinister and sinful nature of the third ranker. Magdaran said

"…I see, the politicians have been set up."

Even politicians were drawn into his plans…. There were many politicians who were opposed to the Great King faction or the Great King's politicians. Although they didn't belong to the Maou side, there did exist politicians who had ideas even more radical than the Maou. To them, this scandal was an excellent pretext for them to act. Even if this attack didn't occur, they would be subject to impeachment during parliament sessions. Bedeze then turned towards Saji Genshirou and asked a question

"Youth of Sona Sitri's peerage, won't you cooperate with me? Could you also convey this to your friends?"

Bedeze's intentions were to have him assist him in taking down the heads of Great King. The ones who opposed the Rating Game school that anyone could attend most strongly…were the Great King faction. Even if the next head Sairaorg appeared to be working together with Sona Sitri for now…the current head and all of the politicians were constantly hunting for opportunities, and would exploit them to destroy that with all their effort as soon as they could. But, Saji Genshirou declined.

"…This is unacceptable. This way of doing things…is unacceptable! You're ranked third in the Rating Games? If you really do that, there will definitely be fans who would be saddened!"

It was an immediate reply that lacked any falsity. He didn't think about the thoughts of the politicians, nor the situation of the higher-ups, he simply asserted his own thoughts. Bedeze paid no mind to it.

"The Champion Diehauser brought to light the truth about the misconduct, and as the one ranked third, I was pointed out as a culprit. …Don't you think that this is a good thing?"

Saji Genshirou's face was filled with bitterness, chagrin and anguish —.

"…Your thoughts are too simplistic. This kind of thing…is too

ridiculous…! If you really did that, you'd just be inviting more hatred from us!"

"For the civilians though, that is enough. The civilians would accept something plain, simple and direct like this. After this matter has concluded, I will take responsibility for the misconduct and retire from the Games. That's right, in order to eradicate all misconduct, the third ranker will resign on his own."

That's what Bedeze's plan was. He would retain his honour, turn over the higher-ups of Great King, and use that as an excuse for his resignation. Bedeze continued

"You are…a nakama[9] of the Sekiryuutei. He…what does he have? As the Oppai Dragon supported by the public, he's been used by the Maou side as a pawn to raise public opinion in their favour. To me…it's rather funny. It's simply foolish to the extreme. That kid would actually have interest in the Rating Games because of those kinds of things…. It was originally a competition that only chosen people could compete in. Only people who possessed talent or something special that was different from ordinary people, or people who had special privileges could participate. The Top Ten is exactly like that. So what if you can motivate those fools into participating in the Rating Games? Most people are disillusioned from having their dreams shattered, and simply wait for their future deaths."

Bedeze sighed and then continued

"—Effort is nothing more than a dream given to fools by the stupid government. Moreover, this dream is the ultimate goal for those weaklings who don't have talent, money nor status. I was different. Precisely because I had wealth, and status, it made up for my lack of talent. I truly am thankful that I'm a noble."

The words of the person ranked third caused Saji Genshirou's expression to change.

"…You hold him in contempt? He's worked harder than anyone else, yet you you're looking down on my nakama!?"

Tears leaked out of Saji Genshirou's eyes as he cried out.

"He's constantly been risking his life for the sake of the Underworld and for his nakama! He's been a step away from death several times, that's how hard he's worked! And what about you!? Not only

did you not put your life on the line to fight against Trihexa and the army of Evil Dragons, you instead came here to do something like this…! Please go and fight…! Fight for the Underworld, and for the fans who admire you!”

“Of course, I will fight. But first, I need to take down the heads of Great King.”

Bedeze’s indifferent reply drove Saji Genshirou’s anger to the breaking point.

A ferocious aura cloaked in black flames burst forth.

“YOU BAASSTAAAAAAAARRDDD!”

While equipping his helmet again, Saji Genshirou extended tentacles from his armour towards Bedeze, yet Bedeze remained calm. In a place where nothing existed within this space, a hole suddenly appeared. The tear in space was the special ability of the Abaddon House — it was [Hole]. All of the tentacles that Saji Genshirou had extended were sucked in by a [Hole]. At the same time that the [Hole] was closed, the tentacles were cut off. Abaddon was able to create a hole in any empty space, and then absorb or discharge anything from it. This special demonic power had been inherited by each generation of his bloodline.

“Damn it!”

Saji Genshirou directed the black flames which covered his own body towards Bedeze. Those black flames possessed a strong curse. They were normally supressed, but as soon as he began fighting, his surroundings would be enveloped with a dense, cursed inferno. If the opponent was to be bathed in these black flames, their entire body would definitely suffer from a fierce curse and would be doomed. However, the black flames that Saji Genshirou released were all absorbed by the multitude of [Holes] which appeared within the space. That’s right, Magdaran had seen it before on television so he knew about it clearly; Bedeze had maintained his rank as third by controlling many [Holes]. Even if he had misconduct, and he obtained the power that he had now through the [King] piece, his inherent strength wasn’t something to be underestimated. Bedeze was also able to infiltrate this Bael castle because of his [Hole] ability. A [Hole] appeared beside Saji Genshirou, and the black flames which had just been absorbed were released back towards him. However, he returned the black flames

to his own body, and then charged forwards for a direct attack. With speed that could not be perceived by the eyes, he shrunk the distance between Bedeze and himself…but Bedeze leapt into the [Hole] which had manifested behind him. Saji Genshirou's fist struck the air. —But from behind, Saji Genshirou was dealt a kick which propelled him into the wall. Bedeze had actually used a [Hole] to appear behind him. Indeed, Bedeze was able to use a [Hole] to evade attacks, but he was also very good at close-range combat. Despite that, Saji Genshirou showed no signs of giving up, and focused his tentacles, black flames, kicks and punches towards Bedeze, yet all of that was evaded, or blocked by [Hole], and it was essentially impossible for him to reach Bedeze. On the contrary, Bedeze extended a single hand into a [Hole], while a [Hole] appeared near Saji Genshirou, from which Bedeze's hand emerged and then dealt a direct hit. Bedeze also used demonic energy, and without any sense of the correct distance, Saji Genshirou wouldn't know what would fly out of the [Holes] nor where they would appear.

Saji Genshirou was completely within the palm of his opponent's hand. He was unable to predict where the [Holes] would appear; even if he was able to dodge the kicks, a [Hole] would suddenly appear and he would tumble over Bedeze's outstretched foot. Bedeze was able to skilfully open a countless number of [Holes], and freely control them. He was able to absorb all of his opponents' attacks, and all of his own attacks were able to land a strike on his opponent—. Bedeze released a single pulse of demonic energy into a [Hole], and after disappearing into the [Hole], it reappeared from another [Hole]. Coupling his original attack with a feint, he released several demonic energy attacks into a [Hole] in front of him again. After repeating this several times, the demonic energy that he had released had been absorbed by a [Hole] several times. He then targeted the space near Saji Genshirou to launch his attack. If it was just from one, he would be able to deal with it, but if it was increased to three, five, ten or even more places at once, he would not be able to know what type of demonic energy would come out of which [Hole]. Aside from the blasts of demonic energy, there were also Bedeze's punches and kicks, and each one of Bedeze's attacks easily shattered parts of Saji Genshirou's armour. Saji Genshirou's armour regenerated after it was broken, after which it would be broken and restored again, and that cycle repeated itself. However, regeneration was not infinite, and gradually, the regeneration rate of the armour slowed down, while the areas where his armour had broken and his bare flesh was

exposed were attacked. His entire body had injuries, and he spat fresh blood out of his mouth several times. As a defensive measure, Saji Genshirou quickly formed a wall of flames, but because the impact of wide-ranged attacks were able to send him flying, regardless of whether the distance between them was reduced or increased, he would still sustain injuries.

Magdaran watched the battle as his facial expression visually tightened. He clearly knew about Abaddon's [Hole] ability. Not only had he seen Bedeze's matches on television, his ani Sairarorg's [Queen], Kuisha Abaddon was a relative of Bedeze. She herself was able to manipulate [Holes], and was someone with considerable strength within her generation. —However, Bedeze was a monster in a completely different dimension. Even Magdaran, who was not good at fighting, knew well that Saji Genshirou possessed power on par with a Dragon King. But, he was still no match for Bedeze; although one reason was due to their poor compatibility, more importantly, it was because Bedeze distinctly understood his own ability and was very proficient with using it. This was the so-called talent that he had obtained after using the [King] piece…. Magdaran once again felt awed by the 'abnormality' of the [King] piece.

"…Shit."

Kneeling down, Saji Genshirou was breathing heavily, and his armour was already in a dreadful state. Even if it became a battle of attrition, his stamina would also be exhausted first—. As for his opponent, Bedeze hadn't even expended one percent of his total demonic energy, so he had plenty of headroom. Filling the air with killing intent, Bedeze slowly walked towards Saji Genshirou who was kneeling on the ground—. All of a sudden, someone with tremendous touki[10] rushed into the Bael castle through the rear gate. Bedeze easily evaded it — but the aftermath brought by the person who rushed in destroyed a part of the castle. A Devil who could wreak destruction simply from the shockwaves of their fist—. There were only a handful of Devils like that. If it was limited to someone within Bael—. The person who suddenly stood between Bedeze Abaddon and Saji Genshirou was a man wearing the golden armour of the lion—. The man — smiled slightly at Saji Genshirou.

"What is it, Saji Genshirou? Your feelings don't just reach to this degree, right?"

Upon seeing Sairaorg's appearance, Saji Genshirou cried out

joyfully.

“…Master!”

Ani Sairaorg stood in front of Bedeze. Bedeze laughed fearlessly.

“Well, if it isn’t Sairaorg Bael. The one known as the strongest [King] amongst all of the youths…”

Sairaorg said to Bedeze

“Bedeze-dono, it’s not too late for you to turn back now. Please don’t let the reputation of the third rank that you’re proud of be dirtied.”

“Your tone makes it sound like you think you can win against me. Hoho, you’re really underestimating me too much, next Head of Great King-dono.”

Towards Bedeze, whose attitude didn’t change, Sairaorg also prepared his resolve to fight and clenched both his fists.

“Since you’ve said that, I’ll just have to fulfil the responsibility of my role as a member of the anti-terrorist team [DxD].”

“Having the number one youth as my opponent huh, how interesting!”

Bedeze relentlessly manifested many [Holes] around Sairaorg.

He also released a wave of demonic energy into some of them. Sairaorg twisted his body to evade them, or used his fist which was covered in touki to deflect them. Actually choosing to take down his opponent's demonic energy attacks directly, this man and the Sekiryuutei who was also of [DxD] were the same. Sairaorg instantly shortened their distance; each of his fists were very well trained as there were no wasteful movements, and he threw his fastest punch at his opponent. But, Bedeze faced the punch that was coming directly at him, turned his head, and then dodged it. —The unexpected thing was that a wound had been left on Bedeze's face from the aftermath of Sairaorg's fist, which was covered in touki. In

reponse to this, Bedeze laughed happily. It seemed like the punch that came directly at him was faster than he had anticipated, and that made him even more excited. Not giving his opponent time to catch their breath, Sairaorg sent out a kick, and then a punch, followed by another punch and another as he continued his rapid assault. However, Bedeze's rank as third in the Rating Games wasn't just for show. He was facing the strongest moves of a newcomer. Sairaorg's sharp kicks were easily evaded by light steps to the side, after which he performed a surprise counterattack as he threw a punch towards Sairaorg's face. Sairaorg didn't mind these surprise attacks and continued his attack.

Bedeze had been strengthened with the [King] piece, but his physical combat skill was actually accumulated from combat experience. He had constantly built up his experience in top ranking matches. Bedeze suddenly raised his fighting level. This time, he added the use of [Holes] into his attacks. A [Hole] appeared behind Sairaorg, and blasts of demonic energy flew out from it. Sairaorg also detected it, and shifted sideways to dodge. But, as if following Bedeze's expectations, another [Hole] appeared by Sairaorg's foot. Bedeze's hand extended out of it. He grabbed onto Sairaorg's foot through the [Hole]. With his leg held down, Sairaorg was unable to evade, and the demonic energy that flew out of the [Hole] behind him closed in. The armour protecting his back crumbled, and blood trickled out. Bedeze's onslaught with the use of [Holes] then began. The same as when he fought with Saji Genshirou just earlier, Sairaorg was unable to defend, let alone attack due to the existence of the [Holes], whereas Bedeze's attacks were able to hit the young Great King. There was however, one thing that was different to Saji Genshirou. Not all of the demonic energy shots that came out of the [Holes] in his blind spot were able to hit Sairaorg. Whether it was the intuition of a beast or the accumulated experience that he had, Sairaorg was able to evade to some degree. —But, that was it. Bedeze's attacks became more intense. Sairaorg intended to counterattack and thrust out his fist, but it was absorbed by a [Hole] which appeared in front of him, after which a [Hole] appeared beside his face; the fist which had been absorbed emerged out of another [Hole] and struck him squarely in the face.

"…It's the first time that I've been hit with and endured a strike with my own fist. …I see now, it's very effective just as Hyoudou Issei said."

The unsteady Sairaorg laughed at the strength of his own fist. He had taken a blow that he had never foreseen, and its strength

exceeded even his own expectations. After all, it was the fist of the youth who never stopped training, so it couldn't be helped if his body was unable to withstand it. Wiping off the blood at the corner of his mouth, Sairaorg adjusted his breathing, and then readied his fighting stance again. Nevertheless, Sairaorg's attacks had no effect on Bedeze. Compared to Saji Genshirou before, his compatibility with Bedeze was even worse. No, it would be best to rethink that. Almost all of the people with Bedeze as an opponent would be at a disadvantage. This just went to show how otherworldly Bedeze Abaddon's manipulation of the [Hole] ability was. No matter what kind of opponent he faced, he was able to maintain his own rhythm…he was simply an embodiment of the technique-type—. Eventually, Sairaorg accumulated too much damage, and knelt with one knee on the ground. Although Magdaran had not seen Sairaorg's fight against Grendel…he recognised that this fight was even more difficult.

"Guh…"

His attacks had failed, he had suffered many injuries, and so Sairaorg wore a bitter expression in the current situation.

"…H-How can this be, even Master Sairaorg is…!"

Even Saji Genshirou felt stricken by Sairaorg's current condition. But, Bedeze shook his head.

"You guys are wrong, you shouldn't be so optimistic. To be honest, I'm surprised as well. I'm often described as someone with Maou-class strength. If I had the intention, I could make a massive [Hole], and then release demonic energy into it, which could blow away this entire castle. If I did that, the winner would be determined too early, which is why things are the way they are now. —However, simply letting my demonic energy pass through a [Hole] of normal size without compressing it won't be able to harm the Vritra on that side, nor the next head-dono. That is to say, people like you, the Devils of [DxD] already have significant strength."

Bedeze held his chin as he nodded.

"I've experienced many life or death battles. Needless to say, that is the greatest method of becoming stronger. …I am once again in reverence of the current situation of people like you."

That was the sincere praise of a high ranked Rating Game player. He then continued

“Precisely because of this. Sairaorg, you’re also someone who’s worried about your own talent and bloodline. Isn’t that right? You also want to use it right? —Use that [King] piece.”

Bedeze extended his hand out, as he let out flattering words from his mouth. Sairaorg frowned.

“…Could I ask what you mean by that?”

Facing Sairaorg’s question, Bedeze answered

“I’ve heard news that those old Devils have [King] pieces. After removing the heads of Great King, I’ll work together with my collaborators, and give one of those pieces to you. You can use it, and become a true Great King. If it’s a Devil like you who has the support of the public, you’ll definitely be able to build a more brilliant family business. A brand new Great King will begin with you.”

While Bedeze looked at Sairaorg, Magdaran and Saji Genshirou, he said

“Listen up, young rookies, you should remember what I say. —The Rating Games are a noble’s thing. It’s a form of entertainment only for the upper class. Low-class Reincarnated Devils who do not have talent, wealth, or status delude themselves with enjoying the Rating Games, it’s really such a joke.”

Those blunt words really only belonged to someone who came from an upper class background. To some extent, that was the truth. If things continued as they were without any major changes or reforms, getting a promotion through Rating Games was quite difficult. Sairarog — only said one thing towards that.

“…I refuse.”

Bedeze seemed to doubt his own ears and asked Sairaorg again

“…What did you say?”

Sairaorg endured against his trembling legs and stood up to explain the meaning of his words.

“I will never deny the way that I’ve lived my life up until now! The path that I’ve walked until now is my pride! You want me to throw away all of the pain, regret, laughter, joy, victory and defeat that

I've had until now!? I absolutely reject this! These two fists, this body, this soul, and my peerage, are all the treasures which I've obtained through fighting! Discarding that for false talent is something I will never do!"

Sairaorg edged closer to Bedeze, with each step full of vigour.

"Not only me, Saji Genshirou here, and the Sekiryuutei Hyoudou Issei are the same. —The value that strength obtained through great pains has…! You want to let them discard all of the harsh things that they've experienced in the past year and have them pursue something like that!? Well, regardless of whether you're an experienced competitor or a puppet of the old Devils, I will defeat you right here without a shred of hesitation!"

Sairaorg's fierce roar caused Saji Genshirou to cry.

"…Master…master!"

Sairaorg's gaze — suddenly turned towards here.

"Don't worry Magdaran. —I'll definitely protect you."

A smile emerged on Sairaorg's face. …He understood it himself. This man, he had been fighting while constantly keeping watch out for this side—. In order to prevent Bedeze's attacks from spreading to this side, he didn't allow him to direct attacks towards this side, and was always carefully watching. Magdaran realised this. If not for that, the battle should be more even. Nonetheless…that guy still chose to 'protect'.

—I vowed that I wouldn't call him.

Ani, aniue[11], I had already decided not to call him that. Magdaran still hadn't forgotten about the time when the position of next Head of the House was taken away from him. But, what surfaced in Magdaran's mind was a childhood memory. Although it was only for a few years, he had followed behind Sairarog, the time when he would play with his ani every day. Together in the Bael castle, they ran within the courtyard, they played together every day in the secret base that they had created in the Bael castle—.

—I can't afford to call him.

One day, in order to find a rare flower, Magdaran went to a mountain near the Bael castle and was attacked by demonic beasts.

He had come out on his own without any guards. For the young Magdaran, it was an easy task for that demonic beast to take Magdaran's life. At that time — his ani Sairaorg rushed over to save Magdaran. In order to protect him, he bravely stood in front of the demonic beast, while he himself watched ani's back—.

—I can't possibly call him.

The words of his ani back then lingered in his mind.

"Get away from my precious ototo! I'll be your opponent!"

Protecting his own brother's body — it was worth boasting about more than anything else, and he was cooler than anyone else was.

"—You're my precious ototo. I'll definitely protect you, and defeat the opponent in front of you!"

The figure of Sairaorg who didn't retreat a single step against a Maou-class opponent was carved into his eyes. Ani…he was once again in front of himself, in order to help his ototo. The figure of ani from before and the ani in front of him now overlapped with each other; tears began to stream down Magdaran's face as he cried.

"……Ani…ue…! I was wrong…! I've done something unforgiveable to you. I genuinely felt contempt at the you who could not inherit the power of destruction. I truly hated the you who took away the position of next head from me! I genuinely hated you! I hated you so much that I wanted to kill you!"

All of that was true. He really hated him. He really wanted to kill him. His ani's victory denied his entire life, so how could he possibly accept it? Magdaran continued

"I am…a despicable person. I secretly scorned you, and tried to sabotage you several times. You should also have noticed. Yet you didn't do anything to me when I was like that! You never even said any words of hatred!"

Yes, in order to defeat his ani, in order to have his ani face trouble, a personal grudge was always held against him in politics. I tried to stop him several times, and also sabotaged him many times. There were actually several times that ani had to face a tough situation. — Even so, ani didn't blame me. He simply said that his own strength was inadequate, he wasn't respected enough, and continuously reflected on himself. He did not blame his ototo at all. Sairaorg…

turned his head back and said

“I took away the position of being the next head from you. I did it to prove my strength to the people who had forsaken me, so it was all for the sake of my selfishness. That’s why I decided. As long as there is dissatisfaction towards me, I will accept all of it. Regardless of whether it’s gibo, or you, no matter how deep your resentment is, I will gladly accept all of it.”

Sairaorg looked back at his ototo. His face was filled with warm emotions towards his ototo, it was the expression of one’s ani. Sairaorg then continued to apologise about the same thing—.

“Magdaran, my ototo. I also need to apologise to you. I’ve caused you a lot of pain. For being such a useless ani, please forgive me.”

…I knew. Ani always recognised it as his own—. I liked flowers, and plants. Compared to when I was the next head, I wanted to be a botanist even more. But, having been born with the power of destruction, I had no choice but to become the next head. Allowing the purple flowers to regrow, nurturing rare apples, not a single Bael praised me, only ani recognised me.

His ototo’s achievements should be spread throughout the Underworld. —Only his ani accepted him as a family member. He said those things as a family member. Regardless of whether it was himself, or brother, the Bael House had ruined their lives—. So… the him who hated ani…was really too stupid. It would have been much better if they resisted against the Bael House together as brothers. Magdaran called out

“Aniue! Please win! You are, aniue is my ani, the next head of the House of Bael! Please let me see it! The ‘destruction’ of the House of Bael!”

Hearing his ototo call out to his ani — Sairaorg revealed a valiant smile.

“Yeah, I understand.”

Facing Bedeze Abaddon front on, Sairaorg clenched his fist.

“My ototo Magdaran — his mind is better than mine, and he always does things carefully. He’s always aware of the subtleties of other people, so he’s more suitable than I am for politics. —He’s a man who will one day succeed the House of Bael. I’m proud of my ototo,

he'll definitely be able to illuminate Great King. After all, he's like me, he's stubborn — he'll put in everything he has to reach his goal!"

Sairaorg extended his fist out and declared to Bedeze

"—Bedeze Abaddon-dono. Come and experience the blow that I've spent my life on."

After saying that, Sairaorg increased his own touki.

"Let's go! As my avatar, the Lion Regulus!"

[Yes! If your body wills, destroy them with this divine body!]

Responding to its master's call, the eyes of the lion on his chest unleashed a dazzling light. His touki increased again, and it filled the entire space. Sairaorg recited the chant of power—.

"This body, this soul, even if it falls into an endless ravine!"

The lion then said

[My Lord and I, we will exhaust this body and this soul to rise up the endless royal road!]

"Raze, triumph, play, and shine!"

[—This is the body of a Demonic Beast!]

"—Lodged on top of my fist, is the glorious imperial authority!"

His touki whipped up an intense cyclone, and at the rear gate, that gust — blow up a countless number of purple flower petals. The purple flowers that were found all over the Bael castle, the purple flowers which proudly bloomed, followed the wind and danced around Sairaorg.

"—Dance!"

[—Dance!]

"[—Bloom!!!]"

Magdaran suddenly recalled the time when they were young and he was attacked by a demonic beast; ani came to rescue him, and the two of them ran desperately through that mountain. The final place

that they ran to — was a sea of flowers in full bloom. There, a gust of wind blew past, and the colourful petals which were blown up danced in the air.

—Yes, it was beautiful. At that time, it really was beautiful.

While enveloped in touki, Sairaorg's body inflated even further.

"[—Breakdown The Beast, Climb Over!!!!!!!!!!!!!!]"[12]

With that final breath, it burst open! Standing there was — a majestic being, the armour of a highly aggressive lion. It was a new armour with a dual-toned gold and purple appearance—. The gold armour was accompanied by a purple touki that enveloped Sairaorg. The magnitude of its density was immense, even Magdaran who was far away from it felt a cold chill. Even Saji Genshirou's cursed flames were temporarily supressed. Seeing this result, Bedeze was shocked.

"……How can that be! Could this be the so-called awakening of supremacy…!"

—Breakdown The Beast.

Yes, ani temporarily released the power that was sealed within the Longinus. It was a form that only a Sacred Gear with a sealed legendary demonic beast could have…but it was also accompanied by a great risk. Like the liberation of the Sacred Gears which the Two Heavenly Dragons were sealed in — Juggernaut Drive[13], the user's life would be consumed after activating it. Moreover, the effects had already arisen as Sairaorg spat out blood from his mouth. Gritting his teeth tightly, Sairaorg shouted

"—Regulus Rey Leather Rex Imperial Purpure[14] Beast of Supremacy. This is the incarnation of my destruction which has been pushed to the limits. With my life force as a source, it provides a temporary outburst of power…well, although this is a fist which doesn't possess the power of 'destruction', I will gift you the power of the Bael's 'destruction'!"

Sairaorg disappeared from sight, and even Saji Genshirou was unable to grasp ani's first movements, but Bedeze was able to perceive it and created a defensive magic circle in front of himself. It wasn't just any ordinary magic circle. Although it appeared rather thin, it was a powerful barrier which was compressed layer upon layer. Without the slightest sound, Sairaorg appeared in front of

Bedeze, and then thrust out a sudden punch. His fist was covered in a dense golden and purple touki. The defensive magic circle — was smashed through with ease by a single punch, yet Bedeze didn't seem to care and instantly made a [Hole]. That [Hole] was going to absorb the punch, and then counter in the same way as before by allowing him to be hit by his own attack. However—. Crack! —A crisp sound was generated. That [Hole] was simply shattered, and that fist struck Bedeze's abdomen directly! Doon! That single blow caused Bedeze to rapidly cough and throw up blood. That single punch caused the entire Bael castle to tremble. The overwhelming force of that fist went through Bedeze's body, and destroyed the walls behind him, while the shockwave from that blow continued much further. It flew towards a place that couldn't even be seen—. Even the ground in front of him had been gouged out. While clutching his abdomen, Bedeze pulled back to increase their distance, while his face was filled with dismay.

"My [Hole] — it was smashed to pieces just from a punch!?"

Just as he said, his [Hole] — it had been shattered by a single punch. Until now, the [Hole] was able to absorb all sorts of attacks. It was completely unimaginable that it could be fully destroyed by a physical phenomenon. Yet, Sairaorg's single blow completely demolished this idea.

"My fist is only for destruction. Regardless of anything, it will only destroy! Use your body to have a good taste of this single hit that I've attained through training!"

Sairaorg flew out at high speed once again. Facing him under the current circumstances, Bedeze was a monster who was still able to keep up with his speed—. But, he simply evaded the attacks now. The fists which exceeded his physical reaction speeds, kicks which dug straight into his body, his demonic energy and the [Hole] which was his special ability were all destroyed. The Bael castle was shaken again. Parts of the ceiling slowly crumbled. Aside from that, regardless of whether Bedeze was hit by the flurry of punches and kicks or evaded, the shockwaves that were generated still possessed a tremendous amount of power that even affected the area outside the city. It was an absolute offensive power—! It was a physical attack that simply continued and continued to increase in power. There were no feints; it was simply a front-on, face-to-face punch, or face-to-face kick—. What was different from before was that his power had been enhanced to such a point that even a Maou-class opponent was unable to handle it. A simple strengthening was

cornering the third ranker of the Rating Games. The embodiment of a technique-type was crushed by pure power! After a few seconds, the one who was kneeling down on the ground with one knee was — Bedeze Abaddon. His expression was that of disbelief, confusion and consternation.

"…How is this possible…what is this, what the hell is this…? It's just an ordinary punch, and an ordinary kick, isn't it…so why is my [Hole] being destroyed? Why is all of my demonic energy destroyed!?"

However, Sairaorg wasn't entirely fine either, in the process of the battle, he was also shaving off his life. His body also cried out in pain, as fresh blood oozed out of the gaps of the armour. Blood was also flowing out from the edge of his mouth. Even so, Sairaorg enveloped himself with touki and didn't weaken it at all as he moved towards Bedeze. Sairaorg stood in front of Bedeze and said

"—You used money to buy an insufficient talent. I used practice and the glory of my life to make up for my lack of talent. That is it."

These words which were full of vigour caused Bedeze to — feel danger all over his body, and want to escape with a transportation magic circle. —But, unbeknownst to him, his arm had been ensnared by a black tentacle! It was a tentacle of Vritra. Saji Genshirou transmitted black flames over through the tentacle.

"—Don't try to escape."

Saji Genshirou stood up and then hobbled towards Bedeze, step by step.

"—Hm! T-This is Vritra's tentacle!? When was this!?"

Seeing Bedeze in surprise, Saji Genshirou smiled. In order to prevent him from escaping, he tightened the tentacle even more.

"—I eliminated its form so that you couldn't see it. After all, there'll be at least one you can't see that latches on. …Master…you could also count me as one. Regardless of whether he's the third of the Top Ranks, I really can't let him get away without a single punch."

Saji Genshirou gradually moved closer while he clenched his fist. With the tentacle still tightly wrapped around him, he wanted to escape, but in an instant, the speed of Saji who was burning with anger exceeded Bedeze's! Whle directly in front, he made a stance

to throw a punch.

“You actually want to treat Hyoudou Issei like an idiot…you dare to look down on my most important friend who risks his life in order to protect everyone! I will never forgive this!”

With a single DON sound, Saji Genshirou’s fist solidly struck Bedeze’s face. Then, the jet-black flames from Saji Genshirou spread to Bedeze’s body.

“…So hot, what is this, these black flames…arh!”

They were the cursed flames of Vritra that lingered no matter how they were eliminated. Bedeze was immediately startled, and Sairarog also approached him.

“This is a flame that constantly burns, it’s an attack that obsessively clings onto the living.”

Because he had suffered from Saji Genshirou’s attack, Bedeze no longer had the strength to escape from here. Both of his legs were trembling, and he was staggering about. Without a trace of pity or mercy, Sairaorg raised his fist.

“Bedeze Abaddon-dono, your ambition will be crushed by this fist.”

“Isn’t that just an ordinary fist, what can it possibly do!?”

While screaming that out loud, Bedeze made several layers of defensive magic circles and [Holes] in front of himself — but Sairaorg’s life-consuming blow easily pulverised them. That fist was driven into Bedeze’s chest directly! Accompanied by a momentary noise, the shockwave of that impact reverberated around everywhere. Regardless of whether it was the floor, the ceiling or the walls, all of them were destroyed, and Bedeze received a fatal blow.

“……I-I…am ranked third…known as a Maou…class person……”

After saying that final line, Bedeze fell onto the ground. Sairaorg said to Bedeze who was on the ground

“—That’s what a fist is. Whether it’s me, Hyoudou Issei, Saji Genshirou, or a man belonging to [DxD]. This is how a man protects what’s most precious to them.”

It was a battle that risked their lives—. The difference between ani and Bedeze was like ‘a fight of beliefs’, and simply that. For a person who treated the Games as only a game, and someone who treated the Games as a battlefield, their opinions were different. And this was where victory and defeat was decided—.

Part 2

The battle between ani + Saji Genshirou and Bedeze Abaddon concluded. Because both ani and Saji Genshirou were fatigued from the fighting, they released their armour. At that time, the outside seemed to have calmed down. Could it be that ani’s and Sona Sitri’s peerage had successfully quelled Abaddon’s peerage? Just when I had that thought, from the looks of it, another person came to assist in supressing the rebels. From the rear gate, someone emerged as a helper. It was a woman with two horns on her head, and long, wavy, cherry coloured hair. Wearing a seductive dress with high slits, she appeared to be around twenty years old. Everyone present was able to recognise her. The woman looked at Bedeze, and then sighed.

“I heard that Bedeze was attacking the Bael castle, so I rushed over to stop him…but it looks like it’s already over.”

—Roygun Belphegor. Ranked second in the Rating Games, and one of the top competitors. That was the true identity of this woman with horns. She was the current head of the House of Belphegor. Along with Serafall Leviathan and Grayfia Lucifuge, she was revered as one of few strong beauties of the Underworld. Seeing Bedeze lying on the ground, Roygun narrowed her eyes.

“Like him, I also used the [King] piece, and am also a case of that so-called misconduct. However, Lion King-kun, I don’t have any regrets about that power or status. I also won’t be like Bedeze and try to spread lies throughout the Underworld to pin the blame on someone…I just want the strength to compete on that stage, and that alone. Aside from the forced matches of the higher ups, I seriously enjoyed it.”

Yes, Roygun was also someone who had been exposed by Diehauser Belial as a competitor who used the [King] piece. But, she wasn’t

like Bedeze who had a rebellious heart.

“Right now, at an urgent time when even the military and police have been mobilised, I will assist you in fighting those rebels.”

—She said that she would be assisting us.

Roygun then asked Sairaorg

“Lion King-kun, do you like the Rating Games?”

Faced with the sudden question, Sairaorg didn’t know how to respond. Roygun smiled lightly and continued

“—I like the Rating Games. Diehauser is also the same. That man loves the Games more than anything. But, I’m really sorry, from the first rank through to the third rank, all of us are so stupid…”

After saying that, Roygun lifted Bedeze up, and handed him over to the guards who were on standby at the rear gate. A feeling of loneliness could be felt from Roygun Belphegor’s body language.

“Sairaorg-sama! Magdaran-sama!”

However, they didn’t have the freedom to worry about the future of the Rating Games right now, as the guards inside the castle ran over, their faces pale and shivering.

“What happened? Calm down and report to us.”

Sairaorg’s words caused the panicking guards to readjust their breathing.

“Y-Yes. I-It’s that…Trihexa appeared in the human world! Europe — and off the coast of Japan!”

Trihexa actually appeared in the human world—. The most worrisome thing was that it had made its appearance at last—.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ Ototo: Younger brother.
2. ↑ Ani: Elder brother.

3. ↑ Chichi: Father.
4. ↑ Haha: Mother.
5. ↑ The name Barbatos seems to be a reference to the ASW-G-08 Gundam Barbatos as well a demon mentioned in The Lesser Key of Solomon.
6. ↑ Chichiue: More respectful form of father.
7. ↑ Imouto-kun: Little sister.
8. ↑ Business Golf: When businessmen play so-so or poorly in golf so that a business transaction goes smoothly.
9. ↑ Nakama: Comrade, friend.
10. ↑ Touki: Fighting Spirit.
11. ↑ Anieue: More respectful form of elder brother.
12. ↑ Kanji was: Beast of Supremacy, Release!!!!!!!!!!!!!
13. ↑ Kanji was: Dragon of Supremacy.
14. ↑ Kanji was: The Invincible Purple Skin of the Lion King.

Life.2 Team [DxD] Attacks!

Part 1

Standing in the patient room, I — Hyoudou Issei, am currently changing into the uniform of Kuoh Academy that I had always worn. After all, this school uniform could be considered to be my outfit. Although I have the outfit that was specially prepared for Team [DxD], if I was in a formation with my own group, I would prefer to wear this. My physical condition…isn't too not bad. Aside from when planning to say that or thinking about that, my body will have severe pain, but everything else is as usual and without any change. Ddraig also said that the recoil from Dragon Deification still remains, but my Sacred Gear can function normally, enter Balance Breaker, and True [Queen] isn't a problem either. Using the wyverns and [Penetrate] are also okay. Even Longinus Smasher could be used. …In other words, only Dragon Deification — [Diabolos Dragon][1] wasn't possible. Also, if I used that again, I might die again. Since I can even use Longinus Smasher, that should be more than enough. I can also fight. But, the doctor, my parents and my nakama all told me to rest and recuperate. At least until the aftereffects of Dragon Deification subside, and my symptoms ease, I don't need to fight. …That's what they said. But, the entire world is facing a crisis, even Rias and Asia have gone to fight, so how could I possibly stay behind and sleep? I was also filled with guilt at the fact that I couldn't join the defensive battle in the Norse World. At that time, the voices of children were heard from the television. It seems like the children who had been evacuated were being interviewed.

[Hey, you guys. What if monsters come to the Underworld, what will happen to us?]

Facing the onee-san's question, the children smiled as they replied without a trace of fear.

[There's no need to worry! Oppai Dragon will come to defeat them!]

[Lion-san too! They'll definitely beat those bad black dragons in a cool way!]

[At that time, Darkness Knight Fang will join forces with Oppai Dragon, and they'll definitely defeat all of those monsters!]

[Me too, I think those like the Switch-Princess can also help everyone. The beams are amazing.]

[Angel-oniisan is also very strong. Because he's Oppai Dragon's friend, he must be strong.]

[Butt Dragon is the strongest! The television also said that he's Oppai Dragon's rival, just watch, the red Oppai Dragon and white Butt Dragon will show up. With that, we're no longer afraid.]

…….

…The children didn't feel any fear at all. Seeing them, I couldn't help cheering up. Team [DxD] had already become well known throughout the Underworld, and the members of the group were already familiar to the children. Everyone also believed that we would join hands to fight against evil enemies together. Although the situation was currently like this, the children were convinced that we would always be victorious in the end. Regardless of whether it was that time during the [Demonic Beast Riot], the battle in the Vampires' country, Auros Academy, or the defensive battle in Heaven, they trusted that we would be able to defeat the bad guys. …We also had failures, no, it was full of failures. Although there were many victories, there were a lot of things that we couldn't protect. I could also hear the voices of condemnation against us. —Even so, as long as there was one person who trusted me, no, it would be fine even if no one believed in me. As long there was hope to save people, I would definitely lend a helping hand. Argh, just from hearing my own name, my body ached with pain…. But, this could be regarded as a fortune within misfortune, I could withstand it.

Anyway, the current situation was that one of the bodies of Trihexa which had divided itself was coming towards Japan. Just before this, I asked Rias and the others about the specific circumstances. Originally, in order to get me to rest, that information wouldn't have reached me here. However, since I was in the hospital, even if I didn't want to, I would have heard about the news that Trihexa was in the human world. Moreover, that news made headlines across all of the television stations and newspapers in the Underworld. The nurses and patients who were admitted also spoke about this news, so it was only a matter of time until I would have

found out about it. Since that was the case, I could just hear it directly from my own group, so I let Rias tell me about the news regarding Trihexa's approach to Japan. After listening to and understanding the information, Rias tried to persuade me

"I hope you'll stay at ease and rest."

—Not only did Rias try to persuade me, even Asia wished for that…. But, since I had heard about this news of a crisis, I couldn't just stay silent and continue sleeping. Fortunately, my parents weren't in Japan, as they had been transported to this hospital. Ophis, who was resting at home, was also secretly transported to the basement of the Gremory Castle so that she could rest. Lilith and Kiba's comrade, Tosca, followed Azazel-sensei and were also transported to the Gremory Castle. Now, the entire household was in a safe place. However, Japan also has my sobo-chan[2] and my friends…Matsuda, Motohama, Kiryuu, my classmates, Kunou and the others that I met in Kyoto, as well as many other acquaintances and friends who live there. —I can't ignore them. I can't possibly do that! This is the country that I was born and raised in! I — am Japanese. Even if part of my body is that of a Devil or a Dragon, my heart is Japanese. My soul is Japanese! My homeland, I definitely want to protect it! That's why I need to go! There are a lot of things waiting for me to do in Japan. I will definitely graduate from Kuoh Academy. I'll join the community with Kuoh Academy as a starting point, together with Asia, Xenovia, Irina, Kiba, Saji, Matsuda, Motohama, Kiryuu, and everyone else! Rias, Akeno-san and Sona-zenkaichou will be graduating soon. I want it to be as it usually is, and go to school with everyone! I finished putting on my uniform, and then left the patient room. Some of my nakama should still be around in this hospital. I want to go together with them. I have to go! Just as I exited the patient room, I saw someone leaning against the wall waiting for me. —It was Vali. His unexpected presence surprised me a little…Vali laughed when he saw me.

"Fu, I wanted to take a look at your face before I was about to leave, it looks like you're already dressed. I'll wait for you over there. —You're also going, right?"

"Oh, of course."

After hearing my reply, Vali laughed fearlessly…but his gaze passed through me and went towards a place further along the corridor. I looked over — tou-san and kaa-san were standing there. Kaa-san was holding a basket of fruit, and tou-san had a manga magazine.

They probably wanted to bring those to me. Upon seeing my appearance, their expressions of surprise were also mixed with anger and sorrow. I said to my parents

“Tou-san, kaa-san, I have a little work to do, so I need to go.”

Kaa-san forced a smile as she said

“…You definitely need to return before dinner, okay?”

“……Of course!”

It was a bit of a poor response. I certainly plan on coming back, but I don’t know if I’ll be able to make it by dinnertime…. In the event that things don’t go well, I might have to continue fighting for a few days…. From her bosom — kaa-san took out an old charm. She placed it into my hands.

“This is a protective charm. Kaa-san refuses to part with it, so you have to hold onto it well. No matter what happens, kaa-san will protect you from the hands of the bad guys.”

“Ah, yes. Thank you.”

Although I don’t know whether or not it’ll actually be effective, I’ll be able to receive kaa-san’s luck. All of a sudden, tou-san looked towards Vali.

“You are…Ise’s friend, right? Haven’t you come to play at our house before?”

Vali was rather surprised to hear these words. Indeed, Vali did sometimes come to the Hyoudou residence…so tou-san saw him and remembered.

“…It’s really only been a few times, simply by seeing my face, you remember me…?”

After listening to Vali’s reply, tou-san laughed lightly.

“That’s natural. Since you’re one of Ise’s friends, I wouldn’t forget. Thank you for taking care of my son.”

“Yes. I also remember your silver hair quite well.”

Kaa-san also followed from the side. Vali acted rather strange, as he didn’t have any plans to introduce himself. From the looks of it, he

was somewhat embarrassed.

“How should I say this, being his…rival might be a better way of putting it…”

Rival. Tou-san became even happier when he heard that.

“Rival…I see! Certainly, you’re his friend!”

Kaa-san also recognised him as my friend and was quite happy.

“Well well! Such a handsome boy is actually my Ise’s friend! Kiba-kun as well, unexpectedly, my Ise really makes such handsome male friends!”

Unexpectedly huh…. W-Well, I’ve had a long relationship with Matsuda and Motohama, so I only had those types of friends. In fact, I have a surprisingly large number of friends like that. However, Vali shook his head.

“It’s not what you guys think. I seriously want to defeat him. To this end, I also angered him — I planned to kill you, so that he could become an avenger.”

—What! …I was astonished by the sudden confession. T-Those kinds of things are best left unsaid right now, alright? That conversation was about the first time that Vali and I fought against each other. It was when the Three Factions planned to form a peace alliance. At that time, in order to incite my power to explode, Vali said such things. But when he said that right in front of me, I was really surprised!

“H-Hey. Vali, could you not say that right now?”

A lot of things originally happened between me and him, but that doesn’t really matter right now… But does that guy really care about that stuff? It was really unexpected. Vali interrupted me, and asked my parents again

“‘I’ll kill your parents’. That is what I said to him. Can you treat someone who said that as your son’s friend?”

My parents stood there stunned and speechless at what Vali said, though I wasn’t sure if they understood him…. My parents looked at each other, and then they both laughed. Tou-san cheerfully said to Vali

“So you guys have fought before. What, everyone has had experiences in their youth when they don’t understand anything and fight with their friends. For this reason, they may also say some horrible things. But isn’t your current relationship quite good? See, you two are speaking about these things quite normally, right?”

“No, by no means is it such a good relationship…it should be said that we just have a united front right now…”

Neither I nor Vali knew how to respond or what to say, and could only reply like that. Vali was very puzzled by my parents’ response, and asked again

“Do you forgive me?”

“What do you mean by forgive, you yourself feel sorry and you’re specifically telling us now? Well, since you’ve reflected on it, isn’t that fine? Right, kaa-san?”

Having been prompted by tou-san, kaa-san also smiled and nodded.

“Yes. It seems Ise isn’t angry either, so it’s fine if you two get along from now on.”

Hearing my parents’ reply — Vali was completely dumbfounded and didn’t know what to say.

“……”

He definitely thought that my parents would get angry and then reject him. But, my parents readily forgave what was said during a fight between two children. Soon after that, Vali laughed. Like a young child, he laughed innocently. I also stared. So that guy was actually able to laugh like a person his age should.

“Haha, I don’t know why. Hyoudou Issei, after all, I truly envy you.”

After calming down somewhat, Vali said to my parents

“By the way, at that time, compared to when your son heard that I would kill you, he was actually more furious when I declared that I would halve the size of Rias Gremory’s breasts.”

In that moment, my parents instantly changed from being cheerful to angry!

“What!? Compared to us, oppai make you even angrier, you brat!?”

Tou-san grabbed my shoulders, and violently shook me! Huh!? I-Is that no good!?

“Well, um, how should I say it…ah. M-My head hurts again!”

Just when I wanted to say that word, the pain began to swell up again! Kaa-san also became angry and shook my body!

“You little Ise! Exactly what is going on, give me a good explanation!”

“Oh, it’s like that, my head…ah! Vali, you said some unnecessary things!”

Seeing that parent-child interaction, that guy Vali—

“Fufu, wahahaha”

He laughed aloud heartily like a child—.

After saying goodbye to my parents, Vali and I walked through the hospital corridor, shoulder to shoulder. Vali’s face appeared to be illuminated by radiant light.

“…It’s the first time that I’ve head off to fight with this kind of a feeling.”

Is that so? It’s you who turned my goodbye into that! My parents said ‘We’ll lecture you well when you get back!’ with anger until the very end! Just when I wanted to complain about a few things to him, Vali suddenly proceeded to say

“—Shouldn’t you also think about forming your own team?”

—Hmm. …What was he saying out of nowhere? Whatever, we also talked about this in the past. I scratched my cheek as I replied

“I’m not going to decide on my peerage yet. I have the long life of a Devil. I want to decide slowly. I’ve also heard that if you decide on your peerage too early, you’ll be bored for the rest of your life.”

Hearing my reply, Vali shook his head.

“I didn’t mean that. Peerage aside, wouldn’t it be nice to form a different ‘team’? My team is not my peerage. But as a high-class Devil, it’s also possible to have private guards in addition to your peerage.”

“…Not belonging in my peerage, but only belonging in my team…”

Also, it wasn’t just limited to a Devil’s peerage, it could be formed for a specific purpose just like [DxD] was. Indeed, aside from a peerage, it wouldn’t be a bad idea to form a team. The question is, for what purpose…. In the case of private guards, do they need a reason to be hired? However, if they were to be hired, I don’t know what they would do right now. To protect the safety of the Hyoudou household? Hmm, when suddenly faced with that, I can’t think of anything. While I focused my thoughts on that, Vali continued

“If you asked me which side I wanted to fight with, compared to the team that Rias Gremory’s leads, I would want to fight against the team that you formed even more. You could call it the selfish desire of a rival.”

Well, when you say it like that. Reasons for Rias and Vali to fight… were very few. For Rias, Vali was just the rival of a peerage member. On the other hand, Vali thought that Rias was just the master of his rival. Using that as a reason to fight was just too…. In that case, I’ll form my own team after I become independent, and then fight with Vali, there’ll be no problems that way.

“…But, we need to cross over the bridge in front of us first.”

—That conversation with Vali then came to a halt. Saying whatever he wanted, and then ending it whenever he wanted, he was truly a troublesome guy. But, I also nodded in agreement.

“Yes, we must get past this.”

“Don’t die, Hyoudou Issei.”

“You as well, Vali.”

The two of us encouraged each other, and at that time, we saw Azazel-sensei in front of us.

“Oh, so you two came.”

Behind sensei, I could see the members of the Occult Research Club, the Vali Team, and Ikuse Tobio's Slash Dog Team; it was quite a grand assemble.

"Sensei and everyone!"

"Azazel huh."

When Vali and I arrived — the Occult Research Club members ran towards me.

"Ise! Does that mean you're going to fight!? Are you really alright!?"

"Hold on, are you serious, darling!?"

Xenovia and Irina felt around my body for confirmation. I said to everyone

"I will also fight! Trihexa has also headed towards Japan, so I can't possibly continue sleeping!"

Hearing my declaration, Rias appeared somewhat speechless, and helplessly sighed.

"…There's really nothing that'll stop you."

"That's right. If we're going, then we'll all go together. No matter what, we'll overcome it together."

Akeno-san also giggled softly. She swiftly agreed to my request to fight. But, the two of them pointed at me with their fingers, and sternly said to me

""But, you definitely can't be reckless!""

"I-I get it!"

—I replied to them! It'll be scary if I make those two angry, and I don't want to make them sad either. Asia nodded and added to that from the side

"Yes, it's impossible for Ise-san not to stop the crisis in Japan…. I'm also very worried, but I'll be there to assist Ise-san."

It was a change from the Asia of the past, who would have said 'Please don't go!' to stop me if I was still recuperating…but how

would it be best to say it, Asia already understood my determination, and knew that I would say that so she decided to help me with treatment and recovery. Azazel-sensei also smiled wryly as he sighed, and casually pat my head.

“Well, I already knew that you wouldn’t obediently stay in bed. — But, you definitely can’t be reckless, alright?”

“Yes!”

As expected of sensei! He really knew me too well! Dragon Deification…I won’t use it. At that time, Ravel took a step forward and handed a small bottle to me.

“This is Ise-sama’s Phoenix Tear. …T-This is the product of my work, you know?”

Ooh, Ravel made it herself! Well, the effects must certainly be amazing!

“Thank you, Ravel.”

After I thanked Ravel, it was Rossweisse-san’s turn to give me an amulet. It was a Japanese-inspired amulet.

“I turned a Nordic talisman into a charm of Japanese style. Although it won’t have any use on the effects of Dragon Deification, it’s able to protect against other disasters or misfortune.”

This was Rossweisse-san’s handmade amulet! Ah! It was embroidered with affection! After watching my reaction, Rossweisse-san’s bashful face turned as red as an apple! Thank you for the cute reaction! And then it was Koneko-chan. …Ah, it was only Koneko-chan’s that I could clearly see…. She seemed to have noticed my gaze, so Koneko-chan poked my abdomen with dissatisfaction.

“…I’ll become large during the battle. So that you don’t get hurt, there’s no need to look at me too much.”

“O-Okay!”

“…If you don’t recover quickly, you won’t be able to see me when I grow up, so please don’t be reckless.”

—Hearing Koneko-chan’s sincere words, I pat her head as I replied

to her with

“Don’t worry, I don’t plan to die.”

After that, Kiba give me a bottle of drink. It was milk.

“Ise-kun, this milk has a few drops of Phoenix tears mixed in it. It’ll be quite effective if you drink it.”

After listening to him, I gulped it all down. …Ahh, it feels like my body has become a lot lighter. Was this the effect of the Phoenix Tears, or was it the effect of the milk? After hearing that my body condition would improve after drinking milk, even I was stunned. I just thought that a glass of milk was rather delicious after taking a bath. …Really, what kind of existence are they trying to turn me into? I wanted to talk to Gya-kun next, so I turned my gaze towards him…while I was looking for him, I was startled to find a person that I didn’t expect to see here beside him.

“Eh, Valerie!? Why are you here!?”

Indeed, the beautiful vampire Valerie was actually here in this hospital! I cried out in surprise! Valerie simply giggled

“Ufufu.”

“Ufufu, it was the Fallen Angel oji-sama[3] who called me over. Right, Gasper?”

“Yes. Ise-senpai, it’s like that. Not long ago, Valerie obtained the freedom to go out.”

What was Gasper saying…. Called over, and allowed to go out…. Was it alright for Valerie to come here? She was able to move about in a designated area, but she shouldn’t be able to move any further than that…. Sensei dispelled my doubts.

“In fact, this time, during the battle against Trihexa and the army of Evil Dragons, Valerie’s assistance will be essential. With the help of the various factions, she was able to temporarily come out. But, there is a time limit. That’s why it was arranged so that she would enter at the critical point during the battle.”

Ah, in other words, there was nothing to worry about with Valerie being here right now, which is why they brought her to the Underworld. Vali seemed to think of something based on what

sensei just said, so he asked him

“Did you find out about techniques on how to control the Holy Grail?”

“It’s something more or less like that. We just happened to come across some hidden information about the Holy Grail in the Vampires’ country. With this, we may be able to prevent them from using the Holy Grail to recover.”

—What! There was actually something like that!? Hidden information…Valerie’s aniki[4], Marius actually had a card left. But, it was discovered by sensei.

“The one who discovered this was someone who cooperated with us on the other side.”

Sensei looked in a certain direction. I also looked over — and saw a person with a petite body wearing a hood. After removing the hood — it was actually the blonde bishoujo[5] Vampire Elmenhilde! Ooh, she also came to the Underworld! During the New Year, we, the Hyoudou family went to my sobo-chan’s place and ended up bumping into her….

“Long time no see, Sekiryuutei Hyoudou Issei-sama.”

She accepted the catastrophic damage to her homeland, and travelled back and forth around the world to collect the things which were necessary for its revival. Sometimes it was materials for reconstruction, and sometimes it was foreign aid for her country. She truly desired the restoration of her homeland, and her attitude had greatly softened compared to her previous overbearing attitude. At first, she continually rejected the assistance of other countries, and other factions, yet now, she was asking around in various places without restraint. It was really quite incredible. …It also showed just how severe a blow the destruction of homeland was. —While I was surprised by the appearance of Elmenhilde, Valerie took something out from her bosom. —It was a purple cross. Sensei said to me

“That is the slightly modified cross of the Longinus Incinerate Anthem[6] that was recently recovered. It was originally a holy relic of the cross — so I’ve let it synchronise with Valerie’s Holy Grail.”

—What!

That evil witch — the Longinus that Walburga had! I heard that the Three Factions recovered it, but I didn't expect that it was in the shape of a cross. Using that…to synchronise with Valerie's Sacred Gear? So that's why they needed Valerie's assistance in this battle. What kind of response would the Holy Grail, in addition to the Holy Cross produce…? Vali asked sensei

"Her Holy Grail was originally unstable, and I've also heard that the Sacred Gear of the Holy Cross is dangerous as it chooses its own master. You can't possibly know what will happen if you allow these two to synchronise. …But, it looks like the hidden information is a breakthrough for this problem, right?"

Sensei replied to Vali's question

"Valerie's ani — it was written about in the notes of Marius' research. It once entered an extremely dangerous state whilst research on the Holy Grail was being conducted, and at that time, the Tepes faction used a fragment of the Holy Nail, which they had hidden as a secret treasure, and were able to get through that crisis. I'm already able to explain the technique that was used at the time based on the information which was obtained."

The Holy Nail, that was also a holy relic? Even if it was just a fragment, the Vampires' country actually had such a thing…. Also, in such a closed-off country, there certainly must be many hidden treasures. Elmenhilde continued

"We Vampires have been investigating the Christian religion that we've been hostile with for a long time. Among all of that research, the Tepes faction was able to obtain a fragment of the Holy Nail through their own channels. I think only the royal family could have handed it down, but that wouldn't be recorded in history or literature anyway."

Anyway, that and the information was all recovered and handed over to the Three Factions…it was a secret among secrets. However, as long as that was used, Valerie's Holy Grail could be supressed. That's why information regarding that was kept. Sensei laughed

"The delivery of a fragment of the Holy Nail to the Vatican made them so delighted. Originally, during the war between the Three Factions and the war against the Christian Church, the holy relics disappeared amidst the many things that happened. Even if it was just a fragment, they really kept it. …Perhaps other factions are

even holding on to some."

Sensei said so as he shrugged. I also understood that, and thrust my right fist against my left palm while saying

"By allowing the holy relics to synchronise, the Holy Grail will stop functioning. In that case, the Holy Grail that the Evil Dragons have also won't be able to function."

Sensei smirked, and then continued

"That's right. Moreover, the Holy Cross that Valerie is holding has already been adjusted. In this state, if Valerie's and the Holy Cross can synchronise well, then the Holy Grail that Apophis has will stop functioning. If that happens, the mass-produced Evil Dragons will also stop multiplying. That will also have an effect on the fake Sekiryuutei and Trihexa."

This entire incident could be said to have come about as a result of Valerie's Holy Grail being exploited. If we're able to stop the Holy Grail, then we have to take it back! We promised that we would get all of it back for Valerie. Sensei continued

"For this, Valerie herself will need to get close to Trihexa. We also don't know which of Trihexa's heads has the Holy Grail…but, there is a high probability that the Holy Grail is with the head that Aži Dahāka or Apophis is on."

In that case, it would be a highly dangerous mission for Valerie. — However, in order to stop them from continuing their destruction, her help was necessary…. Gasper had the look of a courageous man.

"I will have the task of taking Valerie to Trihexa. I will definitely retrieve Valerie's Holy Grail, and I'll put an end to everything!"

They were words filled with determination. That's the type of man that the Gremory peerage had! But, Valerie was holding the Holy Cross and was calm. She was fine because she was the owner of the Holy Grail. If it was me, or someone else who touched the Holy Cross, they would definitely suffer an unimaginable amount of damage…. Simply looking at it caused my whole body to shiver. Sensei spoke again.

"Ah yes, I forgot to say it before. Aside from Valerie, Devils, Vampires and youkai shouldn't touch this purple cross, okay? Even

if it has been adjusted so that nothing dangerous will occur, anyone other than Valerie who touches it will die."

Don't say such horrifying things so casually! That cross truly is dangerous! Only pure humans and Angels would be unharmed by it…. Irina also held a cross in her hand as she prayed…. Azazel-sensei then began to explain the specific details of the operation.

"As of now, Trihexa has appeared in the mythological territories of the Greeks, Hindus, Celtics, and Egyptians, as well mountainous areas of Europe and off the coast of Japan in the human world; a total of six locations. It appears that it has split apart according to the number of its heads. In the case of the Hindu mythology, Indra is able to deal with it — that is to say, it'll be enough for those at Mount Meru to take it on. This might actually be good medicine for Indra. While I'm talking about this, the battle has already begun, and there have already been severe losses everywhere. Several god-class beings have already been temporarily eliminated. Although complete death has been avoided…a considerable amount of human faith is required to bring them back into this world again. This also shows that even after Trihexa split itself apart, its power remains above the level of a god-class being."

Even god-class beings have been defeated!? Damn it! Trihexa was truly a monster among monsters! A beast that was able to compete against the Dragon God Great Red equivalently was far beyond our imagination.

"…This is a video of the scene not long ago."

Sensei generated a small magic circle in his hands, and projected the recorded video out. Everyone was left speechless—. The Trihexa which appeared near the coastline of Japan spat out a massive fireball beyond one's imagination, and destroyed an entire island. The Trihexa which appeared in Europe also blew away the mountains, lakes and forests with its breath of fire—. …It was mass destruction on a level which would change the world map. As the video continued, the fighter jets, and warships of various countries were shown confronting Trihexa…but they were ruthlessly crashed or sunk by the armies of fake Sekiryuutei and Evil Dragons…. Those bastards, they really were starting to attack the human world…. Up until now, they ignored the human world, and simply went after us, but this time…they involved the entire human world in this. The scale of this was already far beyond what happened with the Old Maou faction, Hero faction, or the terrorist attacks aimed at

supernatural existences. —The malice of Rizevim had spread to the human world in the end. Trihexa had seven heads when it attacked the Norse mythology, and now there was only one. It also had just one tail. But, the heads and tails of Trihexa which appeared in the territories of various mythologies were all different. They were probably differentiated by their heads. The Trihexa which appeared in the coastal waters of Japan, its head was a dragon's head…. Witnessing this scene, Asia began to cry and at the same time, became angry.

"How terrible…!"

Xenovia and Irina clasped Asia's hand, and agreed with her.

"Yeah, we have to do something."

"We definitely have to put an end to them!"

Rossweisse-san seemed to have thought of something after watching the video.

"…After the human world becomes aware of the fake Sekiryuutei, Ise-kun won't be able to transform easily from now on. This battle will create unnecessary misunderstandings."

I-I see! What Rossweisse-san said was certainly correct! If every country becomes aware of the fake Sekiryuutei, I'll get into seriously inexplicable misunderstandings as the original…uwah…I can't casually transform in the human world…. Ravel spoke with a grim expression

"This might also have been one of Rizevim Livan Lucifer's tricks. He was quite interested in Ise-sama…"

This was actually that bastard Rizevim's plan…? Indeed, if it was that bastard, then he certainly could have done such a thing…. In the human world, my future possibilities and activities…all of it was ruined! Sensei also wore a bitter expression, but he remained calm and continued to analyse the situation.

"—It's come out. It's possible that that either Aži Dahāka or Apophis possess the Holy Grail and may be with the Trihexa which has appeared in Europe or off the coast of Japan respectively. The one that's appeared in Japan is currently battling with the Japanese Youkai and the gods of the Japanese mythology. As for the one in Europe, Heaven's side, the warriors of the Church and the Vampires

have joined the battle. …Although countries throughout the human world have dispatched their own troops, they definitely won't be able to stop the advance of Trihexa. If this continues, one of them will reach Japan, and the other will wreak serious destruction onto the cities of Europe."

The Japanese Youkai, Angels, warriors of the Church, and even the Vampires and humans were launching their attacks, but were still unable to stop the march of Trihexa. …Even though there were obviously god-class beings assisting in combat, and our combat strength was more than ten times what it was during the [Demonic Beast Riot], we were still unable to stop the enemy; clearly, the strength of the enemy far exceeded that time. Sensei raised two fingers.

"Generally speaking, in order to carry out the operation to stop the Holy Grail, Valerie needs to be together with [DxD]; so we should work in two separate groups, where one group goes to Japan, and the other to Europe."

Bikou of the Vali team asked sensei

"Do we still not know whether it's Aži Dahāka or Apophis who is holding on to the Holy Grail? If we can't figure that out, it's not a good idea to split our forces."

Indeed, it was as Bikou said, we would be much more efficient in battle if we knew that. If we didn't know which side it was and brought Valerie along with us, it would simply add to the danger of it. Ikuse Tobio-san said

"Former Governor Azazel has already discussed this with me, and my nakama are currently investigating. It's almost time for their report…"

As expected of sensei! He tasked the Slash Dog team with finding the Holy Grail since the beginning. Sensei continued

"Valerie and Gasper will be together, and it's possible that they move between both sides. As soon as they find out that one side doesn't have it, they'll immediately transport to the other side with a teleportation magic circle. In the worst situation, it would still be twice as dangerous."

Although Valerie tilted her head in confusion, Gasper maintained a calm expression. If Valerie wasn't here, Gasper might have been so

afraid that he wouldn't be able to even move. Anyway, I personally…want to stop the Trihexa which is moving towards Japan! That place is where I was born and raised. That is also the place where people need my help! Whilst having the same thoughts, Rias looked into my eyes, and then laughed softly. Rias solemnly asked sensei

"I wonder if the [DxD] members responsible for the defence of Japan will be the Occult Research Club?"

Sensei laughed

"Well, I knew you would say that. Anyway, Gasper, Valerie, Rias, and the others will stay together first. After the subsequent reports afterwards, we'll have to decide which side to go to. First, we'll head out to battle with the members we have right now."

Well, which side is the Holy Grail on…. Rias then asked Vali

"Vali, which side are you guys going to?"

Vali replied

"I'm going to the Trihexa which has appeared in Europe."

Bikour, Kuroka, Arthur, Le Fay and Fenrir also agreed as they nodded.

"In that case, we'll go over to that side too."

Ikuse-san was going together with Vali and the others. …I looked over, and saw a blonde woman that I had never seen before…. It was an extraordinarily beautiful onee-san! Ah, she looked up, and smiled at me! —Ouch, uh, owww! My head hurts again! Damn it, I just thought about it instinctively, and my troubles have begun again! If this lasts forever, I may really be finished! I hope I get well soon! Kiba quietly told me

("That woman is a witch under Mephisto-kaichou, Lavinia Reni-san, the possessor of the Longinus [Absolute Demise][7], and is also a member of the Slash Dog team. …By the way, she's an existence like Vali's onee-san.")

No way!? A Longinus possessor! Indeed, I had heard that Mehphisto-kaichou had such a person under him. I didn't expect that it was such a beautiful onee-san! And she's also like Vali's

onee-san!? That bastard, he clearly said that he wasn't interested in women, yet he has such a beautiful onee-san!? Also, since he already has such a beautiful woman, he naturally wouldn't look at the bodies of the women on his side…. At that time, Ravel raised her hand, and inquired about the strategy.

"If it split itself according to its number of heads, shouldn't there be seven heads? But, only six of them have appeared right now…. So where is the remaining one?"

Trihexa had currently appeared in six different places. There was also one which we didn't know the whereabouts of…? Sensei replied

"It appeared in the Dimensional Gap. It should be looking into Great Red's condition, or perhaps seeking their long-awaited aspiration, the gate to another world. In any case, the level of danger hasn't changed, and each faction has deployed their forces to begin the battle."

The remaining one was in the Dimensional Gap…. It was quite lucky that it didn't show up in the Underworld where the Devils were…. Perhaps reading my thoughts, sensei continued

"If this goes on, Trihexa will also appear in the Underworld. For now, barriers which prohibit the use of teleportation magic have been activated at the places where Trihexa has shown up. I don't know how long that barrier will stay effective for, and if isn't able to stop it, Trihexa will definitely appear in the vicinity of the Underworld."

…It was just by chance that it didn't appear at the Devils' side this time. That's right, there were seven heads, so if those seven were transported again, one of them would definitely appear in the Underworld. We couldn't afford to be careless in the current situation. Rossweisse-san also added something to the briefing on the operation. Rossweisse-san was a major contributor to the research for sealing Trihexa.

"This is a strategy to stop the Holy Grail. All seven of the Trihexas which have appeared in the various territories and the Dimensional Gap will be bound by the special restraining barrier which Azazel-sensei and I have developed simultaneously. Although it has a time limit, it'll definitely be able to stop that monster. It was originally only for the two which were in the human world. But, it is

unknown what the remaining five will do. In order to prevent them from making any moves, we've decided to stop all seven of them at the same time. …However…"

Seeing Rossweisse-san pause in her speech, sensei picked up from where she stopped

"At present, that barrier will only work once before it becomes useless. If it has to be used again, we'll need to rebuild a new barrier from scratch. It will also develop a resistance towards barriers. Also, the barrier is only effective against Trihexa, it doesn't have any effect against the army of mass-produced Evil Dragons or fake Sekiryuutei, which makes it very dangerous."

There was only going to be one battle. …There was no room for failure. Hearing that, I couldn't help becoming nervous…! Vali said

"The real battle starts once Trihexa is stopped, right?"

Azazel-sensei nodded.

"That's right, we'll stop Trihexa's movements first, disperse the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei, and then stop the Holy Grail. Finally, we'll finish them off in one go."

Arthur of the Vali team raised his hand with a question.

"Then how will we deal with the Trihexa which has been restrained? It was said before that the barrier has a time limit…."

Just as Arthur said, Trihexa could be restrained momentarily, but according to the explanations of Rossweisse-san and sensei, there was a time limit. If Trihexa broke free again, then what would we do? Would we continue to fight? Our hopes were certainly riding on that…. Sensei laughed eloquently.

"…I, we have our own plan. It is an incredible strategy. It's also a plan that only VIPs know about…also, we will definitely allow it to succeed."

The way sensei said it was somewhat concerning, but every time sensei said something like that, things always ended with a good outcome. After I took a deep breath, I revitalised myself.

"Since sensei has sensei's reasons, it'll be fine as long as we follow along! Sensei always suggests some reckless plans, but they're also

successful!”

“Oh— Ise, those are good words. It’ll be fine with your words. Also, you’re really not going to use Dragon Deification, right? Let alone taking Rias’ virginity, you won’t even be able to touch breasts before dying…”

Hearing sensei’s joke, Rias face went bright red, and seemed taken aback for a while.

“…You, what are you saying at a time like this…”

Akeno-san also giggled like usual.

“But, that is also true…my relationship with Ise-kun hasn’t become like that yet. I’ll be troubled if it really is like that.”

Asia also blushed as she agreed.

“T-The original, healthy Ise-san is the best!”

Then Xenovia and Irina also chimed in.

“Yeah, it can’t do if we don’t have children.”

“I’d be annoyed that I can’t play together with darling.”

Kuroka and Koneko-chan also nodded in agreement.

“That’s right. You haven’t had children with Shirone and me yet!”

“I-I, that, nya nya…”

…What everyone said really made me so happy, but a severe stinging pain was attacking my whole body! This pain is going to kill a dragon! Everyone, even though everyone said such pleasant things to me, all I could do was stand here and suffer in pain!

“Wuah! …Sensei, everyone, you don’t need to say such things in front of me…I’m starting to hurt again…”

Sensei laughed loudly.

“Sorry sorry. Ahahaha. The Oppai Dragon is actually suffering from oppai, really!”

“Guah! My head hurts! I said, you don’t need to say it!”

I clutched my head in pain! Really, how did it come to that in such a serious situation!? …This, really, can it be cured…? If this continues, I could just politely decline the invitation…. Although it's a bit better than dying, my most important part will be done for! My ero-books at home, ero-DVDs, and my treasured original magazine collections have all turned into a fierce poison! Yeah! If we don't stop the Trihexa which is approaching Japan, the treasured ero-works which are kept in my house will be completely destroyed! Damn it! Trihexa definitely has to be stopped! To overcome this, we must accomplish the task over there! While I became determined in that way, Ikuse Tobio-san wore a serious expression and put on a headset to listen to the information that was just received. Then, held told us

"Information has come in. —The Holy Grail has appeared alongside the Trihexa which is near Japan."

—What! After hearing that report, everyone became even more tense. …It was in Japan! Perfect! This was truly a defensive battle now! Sensei's expression changed, and became serious as he looked at every one of us.

"[DxD] will split into two teams according to what was just confirmed. But, the combat force will basically be concentrated as much as possible to Japan. After I finish giving instructions to my subordinates, I will see which side is in a more critical state and go to support it. Before that, don't die. Well, everyone, go get ready!"

[Understood!]

All of us firmly replied!

—The battle was almost upon us!

Part 2

After watching their son Issei go, his parents were resting on the floor that he was just on. A figure appeared at that time. —It was the current head of the House of Gremory, Rias' chichi. The current head — after dealing with the counter-terrorism measures in his own territory, Zeoticus Gremory made some time to go to the

hospital. To him, the eldest son of the Hyoudou family was his important son-in-law. He had also been in the care of his parents once, so he thought that at the very least he had to come out and see them once. He was finally able to do this. Upon seeing Zeoticus, Hyoudou Issei's parents greeted him and then anxiously asked

"U-Umm, my son said that he had something to do and left…. But, he said that he would come back before dinner…"

Even though they had bid farewell to their son, Issei's parents were still deeply worried about him. It was natural. He was their most important son. Even though they found out that he had reincarnated as a Devil, they didn't have a deep understanding of the situation yet, but they were also aware of just how dangerous the places were that their son went to. Issei's chichi cheered up a bit.

"I-If they're boys, it can't be helped that there'll always be a few fights! Moreover, this is a battle to protect us, and to protect others! I-Isn't that right?"

Ise's chichi asked Zeoticus. Ise's haha also waited for Zeoticus' reply.

—A pair of ordinary parents. They were found everywhere, very ordinary parents who were concerned about their children. Ordinary parents like these gave birth to the youth who was shouldering the weight of the Underworld's future. Indeed, precisely because they were parents like these, that boy had such an upbringing. That boy also had to rush over to an extremely dangerous place. Zeoticus held the hands of both of Issei's parents, and deeply, deeply bowed his head.

"…Hyoudou-san, your son, Ise-kun is — a true hero. Please be proud about this…the son that you have raised is a hero who fights to save the Underworld, and to protect us. Moreover, he will definitely return here. No matter what happens, he will come back to us, and return to your side."

Issei's parents tightened their hands over Zeoticus' hand in return, and smiled reassuringly.

"Let us prepare dinner together. When our children return, they will certainly be hungry."

Parents who didn't worry about their own children do not exist—.

Regardless of whether it was Rias, or Sirzechs—. Zeoticus allowed Issei's parents to feel more at ease, while he also hoped in his heart for his own two children to be safe—.

Part 3

Setting out from the hospital in the capital of Lilith, I, Hyoudou Issei and my nakama were transported to the human world — the coastal waters of Japan, and began preparations to intercept Trihexa. The place we were at was a small, uninhabited island. At the edge of the beach, and in the middle of the night, everyone participating in the battle had gathered here. The members who would be participating in this operation against Trihexa included the Occult Research Club, Sitri peerage, Seekvaira Agares-san's peerage, and the [Brave Saints] of the [DxD] team. Sairaorg-san… because the Bael had been attacked, there were a lot of things that he needed to deal with, which was why he had to come a little later. Although the Great King house's misfortune continued, I had heard from Saji that the estrangement between Sairaorg and his own family had already improved a bit, which was something worthy of celebration. Of course, the ones who came here to help out didn't just include us; there were also the high-class Devils who managed territory in Japan and their peerages who came to join the battle. Japan's special ability users group — they had also appeared, with the Five Great Families supporting them. The majority of them were specialists dressed as Onmyouji[8]. These people were led by Akeno-sans' cousin, the current head of the Himejima clan, 'Suzaku'. We had just met her not long ago, and she was really quite a beauty… My head is starting to hurt again! It really is too embarrassing for Akeno-san's cousin to see me in such a worthless state…. Aside from them, there were also others who came—.

"We also came, Ise!"

It was a very familiar-sounding voice; it was the blonde-haired fox girl Kunou, as well as her okaa-san, Yasaka-san who had arrived!

"Kunou! Even Yasaka-san came!"

Yasaka-san bowed.

“Sekiryuutei-dono, and everyone, the youkai of my kind living in Japan are also here to fight. Because our homes have been destroyed, we’ve been quite troubled.”

Following behind Yasaka-san was an endless legion of youkai which could even cover the entire surface of this small island. Even the elders of the youkai appeared among them. They had already fought against Trihexa once. Although they couldn’t be seen from here, the major gods of Japanese mythology were also assisting in the rear. I’ll leave protecting Japan to you guys. Since even our major gods said that, we could only go along with that. In order to face Japan’s crisis, everyone had come out to stand on a united front. At such a critical juncture, I would feel a bit sad if we couldn’t cooperate…I think everyone should work together during times such as these, that way, the future will be brighter!

After we briefly confirmed the details of our battle, we had our last period of rest before the battle began. While everyone went about spending that time in their own way, I climbed up a rock by myself, and looked towards the direction that Trihexa would approach from. …As soon as we arrived at this island, I could feel incredible cold chills in the air. An indescribable pressure was coming from Trihexa’s direction. The sky was also clouded over. That was also due to the influence of Trihexa. …That beast was truly formidable. That was natural, after all, it was a beast that was able to easily change the terrain. It was a beast which was even able to defeat gods. Can I really beat it…. First was to stop the Holy Grail it had from functioning. Then…we’ll be relying on the plan mentioned by Azazel-sensei that only the VIPs knew about. To be honest, I was really curious about it. Of course, we weren’t just going to wait around foolishly for that plan. We have to do all that we can to resist, Japan…it’ll definitely be protected! But if that was to be the case, then we had to fight against Trihexa…it was in a completely different class from us…damn it, in the end, what should I do? Sensei, I really hope that you’ll be able to carry out that plan successfully!

“Ufufu, what is one person thinking while his head is in pain?”

A voice called out to me — it was Rias. She looked at me curiously.

“It’s nothing, I was just wondering how we would defeat Trihexa.”

Rias stood by my side, and looked up at the sky.

“…Indeed. It will be difficult. But, I don’t want to give up. For me, the human world…Japan is my second home.”

With eyes filled with determination, Rias said so. I said

“…It’ll be time for graduation soon. I’m also going to become a third year.”

“Yes. I want to graduate in that school. Me, Akeno, Sona, and Tsubaki are all looking forward to becoming university students, you know?”

“I also felt that. Where are you all planning to go for your graduation trip?”

“Sona is planning the trip. We haven’t yet decided on Okinawa or Hokkaido. It might be better to go to both places while we can. It would be nice to eat our fill in Osaka as well.”

“So you were planning to do that much! No, but, if you use transportation magic circles, then it’ll be easy to achieve.”

“We want to travel by plane. At the least, it needs to be like humans, right?”

Rias gave me a wink. Flying in a plane huh. In that case, the trip’s schedule would become quite troublesome…but that wouldn’t be too bad since they were going to be traveling together. …I held Rias’ hand. Her hand…was shaking. It was probably trembling out of fear, but also out of excitement as a warrior. Rias had always remained calm, but she also had times when she acted like a girl her age. …Moreover, my hand was also trembling nervously. At this time, it could be said that we’re a cute matching couple who share the same state of mind, right? Rias suddenly revealed what she really felt.

“…In truth, I don’t want you to participate in this battle. Even if you didn’t want to, I would want you to stay and rest in the Underworld together with ogifu-sama and ogibo-sama[9], that’s what I truly think. Everyone in the Occult Research Club also thinks that way…. But, despite all that, you would still come here without fail. So it would be better if we simply faced it together. We didn’t come here to die together, but with me, and everyone else together, we’ll be able to increase our chances of survival. Just then, Akeno also said that we’ve crossed overcome many many difficulties together until now.”

What Rias said was right. In this situation, even if I was positioned at the rear, I would forcibly charge out. Thinking about it that way, staying close together with the nakama that I've overcome struggles with from the outset would be a better option. That's right, as long as we all fought together, no matter what the battlefield was like, we would be able to survive. That was all we had to do! …I was just thinking about such complicated things, but we've all come back alive so far. So this time, we should also go for an all-out attack! While we tightly clasped each other's hands, I said

"Yes, everyone definitely has to come back alive!"

Rias laughed.

"…Ise, you really feel reliable, but on the contrary, I've realised something lately. No, it would be better to call it an expectation. You will rise up even further. That's why, I think you and I are another…. …Put your mind in order and get ready."

"W-What do you mean by that—"

I was very concerned about what Rias said and couldn't help asking.

"I want to tour the cities of every country. I really like cities. Even making models of them."

—Rias changed the topic again. She wanted to brush past the previous topic. Well, I get what she means.

"You're right, Rias and I, as well as everyone else haven't gone travelling before. Since I've been reincarnated as a Devil with an almost everlasting life, we have to travel around the world at least once."

"Yes, that's nice. We'll go abroad after this. Because—"

We looked at each other.

"It hasn't even been twenty years since you and I were born. The longer we live, the more things we'll enjoy."

"That's also what I was thinking. I want to be with Rias forever."

"Yes, together with everyone, we'll live peacefully for ten thousand more years."

After pouring our hearts out at each other, Rias and I pressed our

lips together.

……Pain more intense than before was coursing through my body, but I had to endure this time, at the very least! …Well, then I'll fall into the dilemma of having to undergo Asia's treatment again! My body really has become so useless! This really needs to be cured. But, I had energy again. I gained the courage to fight from Rias. — Japan, let us protect you! After that, we got ready to engage with Trihexa!

The joint force against Trihexa quietly flew into the sky from the beach of the uninhabited island. The supernatural existences with wings flapped their wings and flew into the air. The human specialists rode on top of winged shikigami[10] or the backs of youkai. I took a quick glance at the joint force — it was truly spectacular. Devils, Angels, humans, all belonging to different territories, different races with different values and cultures had gathered together for a common purpose. The youkai had the greatest quantity, as they numbered more than ten thousand. — Protect Japan. Stop Trihexa. It was a simple and easily understandable purpose. Hey, Rizevim. You're a bastard who plunged the world into chaos. But, did you ever expect to see the scene of us working closely together? Did you ever think that we would end the confusion? I'm really sorry, we're not always going to be idiots that get played around with by you. We won't lose to an evil bastard like you! While I was thinking that, a wicked atmosphere drifted towards us from the sky. Narrowing my eyes to see — I saw an extremely dark cloud in the distance. No, it wasn't a cloud. Instead, it almost blocked out the sky, an army of Evil Dragons with black scales! We saw a countless number of Evil Dragons! —They were accompanied by the red armour of the fake Sekiryuutei, and the figure of the Imperial Beast of the Apocalypse emerged! …Fortunately, the Japanese Self-Defence force hadn't been mobilised. Heaven's side and the major gods of Japanese mythology had negotiated, and decided to leave it to us first. The Self-Defence Force remained on standby and in a state of alert along the coastline. If we failed, then they would enter the battle…. This Trihexa had appeared in Japan, of all the places in the world. After this, what would happen…. While I was still worrying about this, the battle had already started—. I don't know who roared amidst the crowd, but it became the signal for the beginning of the battle.

"Protect the country we live in

oooooooooooooouuuuu!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

Then, everyone—.

[Uuuuuuuuuuooooooooooooo

Ravel also joined the battle (she didn't listen to me this time, and followed us over), as she spread her wings of fire open and sent out fierce flamethrowers. Her collaboration with Koenko-chan could be described as perfect. Kiba was the vanguard, Koneko-chan was the rearguard, and Ravel also matched them brilliantly as support.

"Ise!"

"Understood!"

Hearing Rias' signal, I also summoned my wyverns. I began the preparations for [Crimson Extinct Dragonar][11]. I allowed the wyverns to attach to Rias' body, as they gradually covered her in armour; and as soon as Rias' was fully clad in armour

[Boost!!]

—The sound of her strengthening echoed, which doubled her own power of destruction, and she immediately eradicated more than fifty Evil Dragons in one blow. Rias and I smashed through a countless number of Evil Dragons. If they were mass-produced Evil Dragons, then they could be defeated with one punch in True [Queen] mode! Rossweisse-san was making preparations to activate the barrier to restrain Trihexa which was discussed earlier. There were hundreds of magic circles in her hand, as she advanced into the preparations for the barrier activation. After the preparations were complete, Trihexa would stop moving. On the other side, Gasper transformed into a dark beast and carried Valerie, whilst the Evil Dragons which approached him were all defeated.

<<Don't touch Valerie!>>

"Ufufu, Gasper, how handsome."

Ara, he really looked like a man! Even his tone was rougher… angering Gasper in his Balor state would be quite scary.

[Burn into nothing!]

Saji also used black flames to eliminate the Evil Dragons.

"Hah!"

Sona-zenkaichou was manipulating her proud water magic, as she whipped up powerful waves from the surface of the water, and freely manipulated the sea. The seawater became a giant snake

which entangled the Evil Dragons, and then dragged them down into the depths of the sea. The Evil Dragons which headed towards Sona-zenkaichou were dealt with by Shinra-zenfukukaichou[12]. The remaining members of the Sitri peerage supported and cooperated with each other as a perfect team. The peerage of Seekvaira Agares-san that was nearby acted in a similar fashion. Next was Akeno-san. Akeno-san and her cousin Suzaku-san both flew into the air. Suzaku-san stood on top of her shikigami, on the back of a large, scarlet bird.

“Akeno!”

“Yes, Suzaku-anesama!”

Suzaku-san — she conjured a large fireball. It gradually took the shape of a fiery bird! It wasn’t a phoenix. It was the Himejima clan’s sacred beast [Suzaku]! It was the sacred beast which was handed down from generation to generation to the head of the clan, along with its name. Akeno-san summoned her Holy Lightning Dragons. The sacred beast [Suzaku] and the Holy Lightning Dragons which the two of them had respectively summoned charged into the army of Evil Dragons! The cousins displayed the full force of their power together. However, the enemy finally allowed the fake Sekiryuutei to join the battle. They released Dragon Shots which were the same as mine, and killed many youkai! The fake Sekiryuutei all grouped together, so that we would have to deal with multiples of them simultaneously. Damn it! How can we be pressured by you! Just when I charged ahead to engage them, a dazzling gold aura enveloped us. The aura transmitted to us was gentle. The next instant, the wounds of the injured youkai were gradually healed. And even those of us who were dealt blows from the enemy…were unharmed. Looking towards the origin of the aura, it was Asia, who was glowing with a brilliant golden light. The aura which was wrapped around her had become an armour. —[Twilight Saint Affection][13], Asia’s subspecies Balance Breaker. The power that she attained by being gentler than anyone else, it was filled with more love than any other Sacred Gear, it was a field of protection —. An aura resembling that of Fafnir’s also radiated from behind Asia.

“There’s no need to worry, everyone! I will heal everyone’s wounds! So, please do your best to fight!”

Asia’s voice was full of courage! I really wanted to let tou-san and kaa-san hear that! Your daughter is already able to show such

courage! The battle was also improving, and at that time, a certain man flew out! —It was the leader of [DxD], Dulio Gesualdo! Dulio spread open his ten feathered wings, and instantly raised his holy energy!

“Everyone, you’re doing well. So as the captain, I also need to make a good show for you to see!”

His aura rose, and swelled; the holy light emitted from Dulio covered the entire sky!

“—Balance Break!”

With that shout, his aura violently inflated, and the sky was illuminated at the same time! Dulio’s wings — he now had twelve wings similar to those of a Seraph, and they were also shining with a golden light. He also had four halos above his head. With open arms, Dulio moved forwards! All of the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei in front of him were trapped within hundreds of bubbles. The bubbles then changed! Intensely swirling flames actually appeared within them, along with violent hurricanes, freezing cold air which froze everything, and lightning like God’s wrath; a vast variety of natural phenomena occurred within the bubbles! Dulio continued to make more and more bubbles, until an entire section of the sky was filled with Dulio’s bubbles. The Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei were all trapped inside, and faced an unparalleled attack. Initially, there were thousands of Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei which suffered from Dulio’s attacks whilst trapped inside the bubbles! But the area of effect was still expanding! That was because the bubbles were being produced endlessly! Dulio stretched his neck, and boldly declared

“This is the Balance Breaker of Zenith Tempest[14], [Flagello di Colori del Arcobaleno, Speranza di Briscola][15]. These bubbles are the complete opposite of the bubbles which stop fighting. They’re bubbles which will give a variety of divine punishment! I’m really sorry if the name is too long! I don’t know how it became some plus αlpha[16] subspecies the more I used it!”

It was indeed an outrageously long-winded name! Was it Italian? But, it truly had an incredible effect! Dulio’s top-tier Longinus, he could change a country’s weather and climate as long as he wanted to…the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei were butchered so easily, so it seems he really was telling the truth! That Balance Breaker, after adjusting its power, it had completely wiped clean all of the

enemies in the vicinity, but, if it wasn't controlled, it could definitely produce enough bubbles to cover all of Japan, or perhaps even…. It was also a subspecies Balance Breaker which he acquired afterwards, it really suited Dulio! Ah, our leader is really capable! With the combat power of Dulio and all of the allies of different races, the mass-produced Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei which surrounded Trihexa had been cut down with a frightening speed! In order to stop the Holy Grail from functioning, we began advancing towards Trihexa. When we were almost there

<<That was an impressive fight. But, you're still too naïve.>>

—Standing on top of Trihexa's head was a brown-skinned youth who wore vestments, Apophis. The Holy Grail in his hands released a bright light, and illuminated the area around it. After the light faded, mass-produced Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei appeared around Trihexa again! The sky was obscured by darkness again. Everyone was flabbergasted.

"……How can this be?"

"…This has to be a lie, isn't this…all of the Evil Dragons…!"

…After having brought down so many Evil Dragons, they had produced reinforcements so easily, it was truly frustrating! Not only that, finally, finally! Trihexa also began to move—! It opened its mouth wide, and spat out an enormous fireball! The people who were directly in front of the fireball were swallowed up by the fireball without being able to do a thing. Nothing remained of them —. The enormous fireball flew towards the uninhabited island behind us—. Almost instantaneously, the sound of an explosion and the resulting shockwave was transmitted to us, and the whole island was destroyed. Just one fireball had completely destroyed a small island—. If that had hit us, all of us would have been fatally injured.

"Attack that monster!"

I don't know who gave that order, but everyone began attacking Trihexa. However, our attacks could only scratch the exterior of Trihexa, and didn't do any significant damage. Even if it was injured, it would immediately recover as if it never even happened. I also used Crimson Blaster and Solid Impact to attack…but the wounds that it caused on Trihexa immediately healed. …I see, no wonder all of those factions had so much difficulty in fighting

Trihexa! It felt like it was impossible to defeat it! Even if I were to use Longinus Smasher to attack it…it would only result in temporary damage. It would certainly recover within the blink of an eye! With the situation as it was, we were troubled over what to do! It was also surrounded by a myriad of mass-produced Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei! As our combat power gradually weakened, it was unknown how much longer it would be until our defeat!

“Haaaaaaahhh!”

Xenovia released Cross Crisis again…but the cross-shaped wound on Trihexa’s body immediately healed.

“Oryaah!”

Dulio also used his Balance Breaker to produce a bubble which was large enough to contain Trihexa…. But halfway through, it could be heard breaking.

“…This is the first time that it’s been broken. Trihexa is strong to the extent that even my Balance Breaker can’t defeat it.”

Even Dulio couldn’t help giving a wry smile. Trihexa continued to advance. Everyone still continued to fight.

“…If this goes on, Trihexa will reach Japan!”

Someone shouted that out desperately. At that time—. There was the sound of a loud ‘boom’ and roar. Trihexa, which was flying in the air, slowed down. An immense holy aura immediately approached, and soared like a pillar of light. The pillar of light flew towards Apophis. Apophis had already escaped from the place where he was originally standing…. All of us were surprised by the sudden occurrence. The person who released that pillar of light and momentarily stopped Trihexa appeared before our eyes.

“—What is it, you’re only facing something of this degree, yet you’re already saying such discouraging things?”

“Fufu, no way. The show starts now. Isn’t that right, Hyoudou Issei?”

Flying in the sky was a man wearing a black coat — Crom Cruach and the wielder of the Holy Spear, Cao Cao!

“…Crom Cruach! Even you also came, Cao Cao!”

I didn't expect that these two people would show up right at this critical point in time! Crom Cruach cracked his knuckles loudly.

"I need to pay back the kindness Tannin showed me. And if you or Vali Lucifer were to fall in a situation like this, I would be quite troubled."

After saying that, Crom Cruach turned his right arm into a dragon's claw, and gathered an immense amount of aura in his hand. With a ferocious horizontal sweep, thousands of Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei were destroyed! Cao Cao also entered his Balance Breaker state, as a ring of light shone behind him, and he stood on top of an orb as he flew in mid-air. With just one swing of the Holy Spear, a large portion of the Evil Dragons were wiped out! Crom Cruach flew out after he glanced at me, and Cao Cao leaned the spear against his shoulder, after which the two of them said to me at the same time

"—I haven't finished watching you guys. So I also came to help."

"The one who'll defeat you in a duel is me. —So I'll be troubled if you die."

…… Damn it! I'm so moved by it that I can't even hold it back! The opponents who once caused us to suffer came to help us in a time of need! It really touched me! However, it wasn't just them who came to assist!

"Look over there!"

Someone cried that out, and when I looked over, a colossal oriental dragon was flying through the air. I recognised this elongated oriental dragon! —It was one of the Five Great Dragon Kings, Yu-Long[17]! On top of his back was the familiar figure of a small person as well!

"It isn't good to forget about the old people."

"First generation Sun Wukong jisan[18]!"

The old man hopped onto his Jīndǒu Yún with the Jingu Bang[19] in his hand, and flew in the air. He then lengthened the Jingu Bang, and quickly swept it at the Evil Dragons!

"I haven't gone up to the front lines until now. Well, I'll use this opportunity and do something good."

Along with the support of the jisan, other people also flew down from the back of Yu-Long!

“This is really too much. Really, I can’t stand him even at this old age.”

“Indeed indeed, that stupid guy Wukong, he actually dragged us over even though we retired long ago.”

It was a fat old man with a pig’s head and a bearded old monk with the necklace made of skulls around his neck. The two of them complained while they flew in the air. The pig-headed old man spat out a large fireball from his mouth, while the bearded old man used the seawater to make various beasts! A large pack of Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei were defeated by them! Seeing this, the first generation jisan smiled.

“Don’t be like that, Wujing, Bajie. Tell me again? Who are old ones who normally complain that they can’t lose to these youngsters?”

—What! I understood as soon as that first generation jisan said it! That pig-headed old man and that bearded old man are the first generation Zhu Bajie, Cleaner of the Altars and the first generation Sha Wujing, Golden-bodied Arhat. So it’s them! A group of really incredible people came! I didn’t expect to see the people from Journey to the West[20] here! The three of them synchronised their moves to act as a perfect team, as they defeated the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei in an instant! They also began to attack Trihexa, they were really energetic! Following the actions of the three people, Yu-Long casually breathed out flames as he said

[So, not wanting to go on a rampage was in fact a lie!]

“‘“You shut up, useless dragon!”’”

The combination of the casual young Dragon King, first generation Zhu Bajie and first generation Sha Wujing was really quite surprising.

“Hey, the prince even came this time. Yu-Long, you should definitely work harder, right?”

Looking in the direction of the first generation Sun Wukong’s gaze — a boy with clothing reminiscent of a lotus flower was flying in the air. He was standing on a wheel which sprayed out flames, while he held a long blazing spear in his hand. The boy released a

holy aura, as he calmly spoke to the three first generations and Yu-Long

“Wukong, Wujing, Bajie, Yu-Long, you need to know when enough banter is enough. The world is facing a crisis right now. Now is the time to show the merit that you’ve earned.”

The words of that boy caused all of the first generation jisans to focus on dealing with the enemy, without raising a single complaint. Cao Cao used his Holy Spear to annihilate the Evil Dragons, while lamenting

“…Nezha Prince[21], even the original Xuanzang’s[22] disciples came, so the main battle force of Mount Meru has actually come here, which means that Indra has also become serious.”

He was…the legendary Nezha Prince! This was really a dreamlike line-up. I really couldn’t believe it! I couldn’t help feeling excited! But, even if they continued to eliminate the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei, their numbers still continued to multiply!

“Kuh! They’re still increasing!”

It was just as someone said, wave after wave surged forth. Even Evil Dragons highly similar to Grendel and Evil Dragons formed by trees like Ladon appeared in packs! I knew that Grendel had been mass-produced, but I didn’t think that even Ladon had been mass-produced! However, the steady stream of reinforcements on our side was also increasing! The Evil Dragons like Grendel which appeared before us were rapidly smacked down into the sea by someone wearing the armour of a lion—.

“I finally caught up. Sorry for being late.”

It was Sairaorg-san and his peerage.

“Sairaorg-san!”

Just when I rejoiced at the appearance of the next head of the Great King house, an incredibly and ridiculously strong swordsman also appeared; he effortlessly sliced apart the Evil Dragons like Ladon spread before us, along with the barriers that they formed. Looking closely — it was a man who floated in the air through the use of magic and could be described as an embodiment of muscles; he held a holy sword like Durandal in his hand as he slashed through the crowd of Evil Dragons. Even a simple kick of his was enough to

send an Evil Dragon flying! My eyes met with that person's. His wrinkled face also had many firm muscles—.

"I was wondering who it was…if it isn't the Sekiryuutei brat."

That person was the one who triggered the rebellion of the Church's warriors some time ago, a big name of the Church who came to Japan together with the warriors, His Eminence Vasco Strada.

"Your Eminence Strada! Even you also came?"

I was extremely surprised! I was rather surprised when the first generation Journey to the West group appeared, but I never expected that even this jisan would come! His Eminence Strada happily laughed.

"Fufufu, the youngsters are laying down their lives at the front lines in the face of a world crisis, if I don't drag these old bones of mine to the frontlines for the sake of the world, then I won't be able to face my Lord. Even if I was once retired, let me return to the battlefield for a while in the advent of a world crisis."

After saying that, His Eminence Strada swung a replica of Durandal and split an Evil Dragon resembling Grendel into two. The Church warriors led by His Eminence also quickly flew into the air and engaged the Evil Dragons which were also flying in the air! Really! All of the reinforcements were people who surprised me! Even tears of joy were flowing out! At that time, Rossweisse-san, who was supposed to be preparing the restraining barrier revealed an anguished expression.

"…The preparations for the technique have already been completed, but we have to decrease the distance from Trihexa for it to work, so we need to think of a way…. I'm also quite concerned about Apophis' movements."

I see, that's what the situation was like! It was certain that Apophis, who stood on top of Trihexa's head would hinder the barrier's activation! But, she needed to get closer to Trihexa first for it to work. I flew to Rossweisse-san's side, and at that time, Cao Cao also came over.

"I'll clear the way. Count it as one of my special services."

After saying that, he rotated the Holy Spear, and recited the chant of power!

“O Spear, the true Holy Spear which pierces through God! Absorb the ambition of the King of Domination sleeping within me, and pierce through the gap of blessing and destruction! Thou, announce the will, and turn into light!”

The ring of light behind Cao Cao shone even brighter, and the aura which enveloped the Holy Spear also increased until its limit. For us Devils, just seeing this light and having that light shine upon us was enough to cause our skin to sting in pain as if it was being burnt. I could even feel it through my armour, so it was evidently quite a powerful holy aura. Cao Cao chanted the last part! [—Truth Idea!] [23]

As if the spear was being blessed, it released a dazzling radiance, and holy waves radiated out from it. The holy waves released by the spear spread across the entire sky. Instantly, the Evil Dragons seemed to be afraid of something invisible to them, and moved some distance away from Trihexa. Apophis, who was standing on Trihexa’s head, was also affected; the Holy Grail fell from his hands, as he suddenly cried out in pain.

< <…T-This is, the God of the Bible’s…authority! …If this continues…I might even be deprived on my consciousness…! > >

Apophis fled from Trihexa’s body! Amazing! Although I didn’t understand, was it a power which was able to repel evil things? I had also heard about the Holy Spear’s Truth Idea. The effect was based on the will of the God of the Bible that dwelled within the Holy Spear…. This time, was it the power to push back a great number of Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei, and cause pain to Apohis…?

“…It looks like the will within this spear has responded to me this time. Well, it’s your turn now.”

Rias and Rossweisse-san shared a glance as they both nodded in confirmation. Rossweisse-san shortened her distance to Trihexa. She then created a gigantic magic circle which was wide enough to cover the surrounding area, and cried out!

“I’m stopping Trihexa!”

After Rossweisse-san touched the magic circle with her hand, the barrier activated. The next instant, an unknown energy field

covered the entire area. Many barrier magic circles then appeared all over Trihexa's body, and completely covered the Imperial Beast of the Apocalypse. Trihexa issued a cry of pain, but the barrier magic circles unfolded one after the other, and Trihexa was trapped underneath several layers. At last—. All of us then confirmed that Trihexa was paralysed.

…….

…Trihexa didn't move!

[SUUCCCCCEEESSSSS!]

Everyone erupted! They loudly cheered about Trihexa's paralysation! However, the battle wasn't over yet! If we didn't stop the Holy Grail, the mass-produced Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei would still be able to move. The barrier was only able to restrain Trihexa! Next was to remain vigilant of Trihexa's movements, exterminate all of the Evil Dragons, and give the Holy Grail to those two people. I said to Gasper and Valerie

"I'll leave the Holy Grail to you, Gasper and Valerie!"

<<Understood! I'll definitely stop the Holy Grail!>>

"Ufufu, let's do our best then. Don't fall behind on your side either."

Gasper and Valerie flew towards the dragon's head of Trihexa to stop the Holy Grail which was left on top of it. The rest is up to them. —Well, I guess I'll fight on this side now. I saw that Apophis had moved away from Trihexa's head. He had landed on another uninhabited island that was nearby. The Evil Dragons which resembled Grendel and Ladon were still multiplying at a considerable rate. Compared to the usual mass-produced Evil Dragons, their abilities were superior, and they were incomparably strong. But, Apophis was far more dangerous than them! After readying the determination to fight against Apophis in a death match, I flew towards the island that he landed on—.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ Kanji was DxD.

2. ↑ Sobo: Grandmother.
3. ↑ Oji-sama: Respectful way of addressing an older or middle-aged man.
4. ↑ Aniki: Brother (older).
5. ↑ Bishoujo: A pretty young girl.
6. ↑ Kanji was Chief Mourner's Crucified Stand of Purple Flame.
7. ↑ Kanji was Eternal Ice Princess.
8. ↑ Onmyouji: Traditional Japanese specialists of magic and divination.
9. ↑ Ogifu-sama and ogibo-sama: Father-in-law and mother-in-law respectively.
10. ↑ Shikigami: Supernatural beings from Japanese folklore which are summoned by Onmyouji. They are often represented as spirits which take the form of beasts or animals.
11. ↑ Kanji was Crimson Extinct Dragon Princess.
12. ↑ -zenfukukaichou: Former Vice-President.
13. ↑ Kanji was Embrace of the Holy Dragon Princess' Garden of Love.
14. ↑ Kanji was Prison of Bright Heavenly Thunder.
15. ↑ Kanji was: Inevitable Punishment of the Holy Angel's Rainbow, Shining Star of the End. The furigana is Italian, roughly meaning: Scourge of Rainbow Colours, Hope of Briscola/Trump. Briscola is an Italian card game, while trump (card) has the same name.
16. ↑ An Engrish term which could be interpreted as: extra or additional.
17. ↑ Kanji was Jade Dragon.
18. ↑ jisan: An old man.
19. ↑ The Jīndǒu Yún is his magic cloud and Jingu Bang is his magical staff.
20. ↑ Journey to the West is a 16th century Chinese novel loosely based on the account of the monk Xuanzang. It details the journey of a group of pilgrims (Xuanzang, Sun Wukong, Zhu Bajie, Sha Wujing), with a strong emphasis on Chinese folklore, mythology and Buddhism.
21. ↑ The Nezha Prince is protection deity in Chinese folk religion. He also appeared in Journey to the West.
22. ↑ Kanji was Tang Sanzang Tripitaka, which is another name for Xuanzang. This title refers to his mission to seek the Three Collections of Buddhist Scriptures.
23. ↑ Kanji was Brightness of Supremacy.

Determination

Going back in time, approximately two weeks before the revival of Trihexa—.

Vali Lucifer travelled alone to a certain European country. He arrived at a small town at the foot of a mountain which was far from the city. Vali went up to a mountain some distance away from the small town, and used high-precision binoculars to look at a certain place. The target that he was looking at — was just an ordinary person. What he saw through the binoculars was a middle-aged woman farming in the garden. At around forty years of age, it was a beautiful woman with black hair. After Vali was taken in by Azazel, he sought to raise his own strength whilst looking for the two people who were related to him by blood. One of them was the sofu[1] that he abhorred, and the other one was—. Vali intently watched every action that the woman made. What he was looking at was — his own haha[2]. Not long ago, the Grigori had obtained some information through their connections with the Norse faction.

—Your haha has been found.

After Vali was sheltered by the Grigori, Vali's chichi[3] had immediately erased his haha's memories and discarded her. Only now, after many twists and turns, she had begun her second life in a small rural town, far from the city. …Vali recalled the times when he lived together with his haha. That was when he was subjected to the abuse of his own sofu and chichi. Haha had always come forth to protect him. However, haha only had the body of a human; she had given birth to him due to his chichi's frivolity, his sofu was also the son of the Maou, hence various elements overlapped, and his haha was always powerless.

One time, after being abused, haha had wrapped bandages over his own wounds…it was discovered in the end, and it became haha's turn to be violently abused. The look of haha's crying face was deeply rooted in his memory. His young mind never went to seek his haha's help again. If he did, haha would be beaten again. If he was going to allow haha to cry, he would bear it himself instead. Fortunately, he was born with the power of Lucifer and the Hakuryuukou, so he was sturdier than ordinary children. Haha's happiness would come about from breaking off the relationship to himself, that was one thing that Vali understood since he was very

young. But, he could clearly remember the gentleness that haha had shown him. Behind the backs of chichi and Rizevim, she cooked pasta for him. In order to prevent them from finding out, she put in very little salt and pepper, so the flavour was quite bland. Even so, Vali thought that eating haha's homemade pasta was more delicious than anything else. He felt deep in his heart that this simple food was incredibly delicious. He didn't speak much with haha, very little actually. But, if they were ever able to meet each other again, there was one thing that he had to tell her at the very least. It definitely wasn't something like loving her, familial love, or wanting to live together. All that he wanted to tell her was that he had grown up splendidly into an adult.

In fact, he clearly understood one thing while he was strengthening himself. At the same time that he became stronger, to an ordinary person like haha, Vali Lucifer was an extremely abnormal existence. If he made contact with haha — aside from Rizevim, there would be many people who would target haha. Rather, it was really surprising that she had not been found by Rizevim so far. …Perhaps Rizevim was too immersed in the dream of another world, and the existence of an ordinary human woman was negligible in his eyes.

Suddenly, Vali saw something that he couldn't believe.

—A young boy and girl ran towards haha.

…It was a boy and girl that looked very similar to himself. He immediately understood.

—They were his own otouto[4] and imouto[5].

Haha had probably gotten married to a human male. And she had established a family. She had finally obtained an ordinary family.

—Sorry, this is all I can do for you.

The memory resurfaced again. With the bland pasta that he obsessed about, haha apologised to him. …At that time, mother was extremely sad. But, looking at her through the binoculars today… she was very, very happy. Very joyful. Just seeing that, Vali felt warmth in his heart. For a moment, he and the boy overlapped with each other. He imagined the scene of himself laughing while talking to haha—. …If he was born into an ordinary family, would he laugh like that while living together with haha…? …Vali quietly put down the binoculars which were in his hand.

—Return.

Vali didn’t meet haha face to face. He decided to leave that place. He couldn’t meet with haha. He couldn’t meet with his otouto and imouto. He was an abnormal existence. If he met them, he would simply ruin their current happy lives. Step by step, without any indecisiveness or hesitation, Vali left the small town. Vali had a grand aim, he wanted to become stronger than anyone else, he wanted to become the [True White Dragon God Emperor][6]. Stronger than the sofu who abused him, his chichi, and anyone else. He would develop the ability that he was born with to the utmost limits. But, he now had another new goal.

—Protect the safety of that haha and her children. Allow them to live safe and sound until their peaceful eternal slumber. No, not only them, there were also their children, and their grandchildren that he needed to protect with his all. Compared to Hyoudou Issei who sought to rescue many people, he would not say such grand words. He wasn’t that type of person. But, just one small family was fine; Vali vowed in his heart that he would definitely protect them —.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ Sofu: Grandfather.
2. ↑ Haha: Mother.
3. ↑ Chichi: Father.
4. ↑ Otouto: Younger brother.
5. ↑ Imouto: Younger sister.
6. ↑ Pronounced as: shin naru hakuryuushin ou.

Life.Lucifer Dawn of the Morning Star — Death Match—

Part 1

In the mountainous region of a certain European country, the battle against Trihexa, an army of Evil Dragons, and an army of fake Sekiryuutei began. The forces engaging with them were the Vali Team, Slash Dog Team, and magicians from other organisations who all belonged to the anti-terrorist Team [DxD]. The Vampires also participated in the battle. The Tepes faction and Carmilla faction set aside their differences and joined the battle together. The headquarters of the Church, the Vatican, also came all the way here to send out their Church warriors, and of course, reincarnated Angels also came. The high-class Devils who held territories in Europe also brought along their peerages to join the battle. Amidst them, there were also several Ultimate Class Devils, including the former Dragon King Tannin. As soon as the clash began, the Vali Team and Slash Dog Team took the lead to take on the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei. From the sky all the way down to the forest, intense fighting broke out. Because it was winter, snow had piled up on the mountain, which made movement somewhat inconvenient. In addition, the appearance of Grendel-type and Ladon-type Evil Dragons further complicated the battle situation. Amidst all of the fighting, an enormous fireball that Trihexa spat out erased an entire mountain. While Vali easily returned the attacks of the Grendel-type Evil Dragons and sent them flying at the same time, he thought.

…The Holy Grail isn't on this side, but there are still strong enemies.

[—Diabolism Thousand Dragon][1] Aži Dahāka.

They had fought once before, but a winner was not decided. Even after he was wounded, he still laughed as he fought back; Vali had not forgotten Aži Dahāka's appearance back then. One of the heads was able to withstand many attacks and continue to laugh while counterattacking. More than anything, he was the most dangerous enemy. It was certain that he was manipulating Trihexa alongside

Apophis, but Aži Dahāka by himself certainly had the strength to destroy all of Europe.

—It'll be good if I can find a chance to settle things.

These thoughts and feelings gradually grew stronger. As he steadily became more and more excited, Vali didn't really want to fight against the fake Sekiryuutei. He had already recognised that man as his rival. By fighting against these kinds of counterfeits, it seemed like some kind of contamination somewhere within himself, and that generated feelings of disgust and a desire not to touch them. Similarly, while Albion was eliminating these fake Sekiryuutei, he gradually developed a feeling of revulsion. However, since the fake Sekiryuutei were produced using the original as a basis, ordinary warriors were unable to defeat them, so the stronger people mainly dealt with them.

—At that time, Trihexa became entrapped by a powerful barrier technique that had previously not been seen. After Trihexa let out a cry of pain, it stopped moving. Vali immediately understood that this was what Azazel had spoken of, the barrier which was able to temporarily stop Trihexa. The effect of it was evident, as the Trihexa that was about to spit out another fireball had become completely motionless. Once Trihexa stopped moving, the allies fighting on the Japanese side would be able to stop the Holy Grail. What was left on this side was to clean up the rest of the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei. Since that was the case, now was the most suitable time to get rid of the most dangerous enemy. He then began to search for the most dangerous existence present. After surveying the area in the distance, he discovered that he was standing on top of a mountain some distance away from here.

A person suddenly spoke to Vali. It was Ikuse Tobio. After he sliced apart the Grendel-type Evil Dragons by extending a countless number of colossal blades out from the ground, he said

"Vali, you should go. …The opponent that you want to settle the score with is here, right?"

He and the black dog [Jin] had also noticed, and he looked in that direction. Ikuse Tobio said

"You don't want them to continue wreaking havoc, right? …If this destruction continues, it won't just be the major cities of Europe, the damage will even extend to the small towns."

As soon as he said that, Vali understood that Ikuse Tobio already knew about the circumstances on his side. Indeed, it was just as he said. When he heard that Trihexa had appeared in Europe, what immediately surfaced in Vali's mind was — the safety of the family living in that small town. He clearly knew that he wasn't an indecisive person, and having these feelings made him very troubled. However, he was deeply worried about that family. Precisely because of this, Vali understood that the most dangerous enemy here — Aži Dahāka needed to be defeated.

"That's right. Leave this place to me, Tobi and Va-kun's friends."

The witch — Lavinia Reni said that while she froze the Evil Dragons in the air one after the other. At her side was a humanoid ice figure, standing at a total height of three metres. It seemed to be wearing a dress, and had four slender arms. Although its face didn't have a nose or a mouth, it had six eyes on the left side of its face, while the right side of its face was studded with something resembling the thorns of a rose. —[Absolute Demise][2], one of the Longinus. It was also an independent avatar type. Once activated, the Ice Princess would appear at the wielder's side. The Princess would obey the commands of its wielder, and freeze anything. As long as Lavinia wanted to, it could instantly turn the entire area into a frozen world. At its maximum range, it could lock an entire small country within a crystal of ice. Moreover, the wielder Lavinia was originally a witch who was able to utilise various types of magic. Mass-produced Evil Dragons couldn't possibly defeat her, especially since she had the Ice Princess. Bikou, who was accompanying Ikuse Tobio and Lavinia also smiled as he extended his Ruyi Bang[3] and stabbed several Evil Dragons.

"Kakaka, that's how it is! Vali, leave this place to us, you go and defeat that bastard Aži Dahāka who's controlling Trihexa!"

On another side, Arthur used the Holy King Sword to release a massive holy wave which split the barriers that were put up by the Ladon-type Evil Dragons.

"Give us a good show as the leader. You are the dragon that Caliburn and I have chosen, so show me the path of a dragon's survival."

Kuroka was controlling a countless number of Kasha, and she mercilessly incinerated the Ladon-type Evil Dragons.

“I always thought that following Vali was a good thing, you know? Thanks to you…I was able to laugh together with my imouto[4] again. Just that has blown away all of the unpleasant things of the past nyan. So—”

While assisting her ani, Le Fay used magic to fight and spoke at the same time.

“The Two Heavenly Dragons of this era are good friends, and I really like it! I think it’s really cool!”

Even Fenrir, assisting Le Fay from the side used its teeth and claws to tear apart the Grendel-type Evil Dragons. The ten metre tall golem — Gogmagog released a laser from its eyes, while firing out rockets from its arms to shoot down the mass-produced Evil Dragons. The members of the Vali Team had come over to support him. His former nakama, Ikuse Tobio and Lavinia, and even his current nakama said that to him. Vali felt moved. At the same time, he thanked them, from the bottom of his heart.

—Thank you all.

It was rather useless that he couldn’t actually say that in an honest manner. But, if he did say it, would he be laughed at again for not acting like himself? Ikuse Tobio still smiled as gently as he did back then as he said to Vali

“You chose your way of live as one of the Two Heavenly Dragons and as a Lucifer. So show this world your answer.”

He took a step forward. The black dog — Jin followed behind him.

“Well, I’m also — going. Jin, are you ready?”

Jin wagged its tail. Then — a world of darkness appeared. All of the shadows, black fog and darkness around Ikuse Tobio, all of the darkness in the world was gathered there, and from there it happened. Then, from his mouth, a curse-like chant was calmly and deeply recited.

< < —I sing for the slaying of a thousand humans > >

Ikuse Tobio and the black dog were enshrouded in a jet-black haze. It then spread, and covered everything in the surrounding area.

< < —I praise the murder of ten thousand cycles of ill omens > >

Their limbs gradually dissolved into the darkness, and turned into something with an abnormal figure.

< < —My name has been spread throughout the nether abyss, it will become that of the false god of the polar night and midnight sun > >

The black dog Jin sank into the darkness at his feet.

< < —Thou, shalt become my demon blade of darkness that annihilates everything > >

Ikuse Tobio's entire body was enveloped in darkness. Although his figure retained some human resemblance, it had become something that differed from a human. The head and face had morphed into something resembling a dog. The darkness continued to converge around Ikuse Tobio's body. It formed forelegs, hindlegs, a tail, and it opened its massive jaws. The gathering of darkness in the surrounding area formed figures one by one. Appearing everywhere around Ikuse Tobio were large packs of < <Dogs> > with jet-black fur.

< < —To become something false, the creator of the paranormal > >

After Ikuse Tobio recited the last line of the chant, the < <Dogs> > that were born from the darkness let out a distressing, and penetrating howl that shook everyone's mind and body to the very core.

Ooooooooooohhhh….

What appeared there was, a humanoid beast clad in darkness—. Gathered around him were enormous < <Dogs> > that breathed the darkness—. Ikuse Tobio was holding a long and sharp scythe, which had extended out from under his feet. As he swung the scythe, it looked as if he was harvesting the souls of the living, while the pack of dogs looked like apostles of Hell. The phenomena still had not finished yet, as gigantic blades extended out from the ground in the surrounding area, one after another; sharp, thick and long blades. They seemed to be demonic swords capable of cutting gods apart, a symbol of ill omens. The whole place, the entire mountain was covered with blades. Jet-black blades, grew, grew, and continued to grow out without any sign of stopping. With the momentum from their extension, they tore apart the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei without any further ado. When Ikuse Tobio

lightly swung the scythe, the space itself looked like it was cut in half; following that, all of the trees, rocks, and Grendel-type Evil Dragons were sliced into two. Having become a beast of darkness, Ikuse Tobio silently walked through the mountain forest, and when he swung his scythe, the Ladon-type Evil Dragons were cut apart, along with the barriers that they produced.

The pack of black dogs also followed their master; they snapped the blades which had appeared in the forest with their teeth, and then gripped them in their mouths. The pack of black dogs that carried blades in their mouths rapidly cut down the Evil Dragons. The dogs sank into in the shadows, then moved through the shadows, and appeared in the blind spots which were the shadows of their enemies. They followed their master and mercilessly reaped the lives of the Evil Dragons. All that was left of the path that they travelled along were the corpses of the Evil Dragons and a dark aura. There didn't exist anything that they couldn't cut—. Even after having faced off against various kinds of powerful beings, the Vali Team were amazed by the scene before their eyes.

Originally, the Balance Breaker that the wielder of [Canis Lykaon] [5] awakened was called [Night Celestial Slash Dogs] [6]. However, Ikuse Tobio had already awakened that Balance Breaker from the moment that he was born, and after he became accustomed to using his Sacred Gear, he finally reached a deeper level. —[Perfectus Tenebrae Lykaon et Fortis Densus Laelaps] [7], that was what Ikuse Tobio attained, no, pierced through, by polishing [Night Celestial Slash Dogs] to the limits, the phenomenon exhibited by the Abyss Side of his Balance Breaker. Having said that, although Ikuse Tobio was able to cut anything apart, he was still powerless against Trihexa, because that was the monstrous existence that Trihexa simply was.

Each faction had their own hypotheses regarding Longinus. The hypothesis that the most knowledgeable Azazel proposed was [Longinus are highly scalable and expandable Sacred Gears]. Especially after attaining the Balance Breaker, their power would significantly increase, and the abilities that they could manipulate also increased. Longinus were the kinds of Sacred Gears that greatly transcended other Sacred Gears. Azazel had said before that Longinus absorbed their wielder's abilities and creativity, and then became a vessel for their realisation.

—The original meaning of Balance Breaker referred to a forbidden move of the Longinus. Azazel proposed that the possibilities of a

Balance Breaker could be roughly divided into three types. The majority of Balance Breakers, including subspecies, could be classified as strengthening, evolving to a point of transformation. By pursuing the arrogance of themselves and the Sacred Gear, one would fuse together with their Sacred Gear to produce the Abyss Side. This was the type that Vali and Ikuse Tobio belonged to. Finally, there were those that couldn't be categorised by this system due to their sudden variation, and those were the exceptions among exceptions. This was Hyoudou Issei, Kiba Yuuto's Holy-Demonic Sword, Gasper Vladi, and Saji Genshirou; something had happened in relation to the Gremory peerage. In particular, Hyoudou Issei, Gasper Vladi and Saji Genshirou had also reached the Abyss Side. It could be described as an extremely abnormal generation. The phenomenon that was originally impossible began to occur frequently around Hyoudou Issei. Azazel was also quite intrigued by this.

—In this era, interesting Sacred Gears and Longinus that were previously never seen in past generations have appeared. Azazel had happily spoken about that before. Vali's lips curled up as he laughed, agreeing with what he had said. That was why he, Hyoudou Issei, and those powerful enemies had gained a deeper evolution, as if it had been expected. This one thing was something that he looked forward to. His fight against Hyoudou Issei would one day continue. This was something that they had both agreed on. To this end — the removal of the threats and powerful enemies before him was the top priority. Lavinia said

"Go quickly, Va-kun. This place is soon going to become a world of ice and blades, okay?"

After Vali heard that, he jumped into the air to leave that place. It seemed like she was also going to use her Balance Breaker. After Vali left, the entire mountain was frozen solid, and there were clusters of overgrown blades everywhere. It had truly become the world that Lavinia mentioned. After Tannin and his peerage knocked all of the Evil Dragons in the air down to the mountain forest, Tannin said to Vali

"Be careful of Aži Dahāka's magic, young Hakuryuukou!"

Vali was surprised by Tannin's advice for a moment…then he quietly nodded. There would definitely be no problems to leave the army of mass-produced Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei to them and the allies. Vali then searched for Aži Dahāka's presence, and

swiftly flew towards it.

Part 2

After flying at high speed over the mountain range for a few seconds, Vali found the source of the powerful aura. The other party had also noticed him. However, they didn't launch any attacks in his direction. Vali stopped and landed near him. Standing before him was a colossal black dragon with three heads. Aži Dahāka looked towards Vali with a welcoming expression.

[Yo—, you came, white one.]

[Yahoo ☆]

[You're late!]

Then, Aži Dahāka cast his gaze to the area behind him. Indeed, the place he was looking at was the location of the battlefield where [DxD] and their allies were currently fighting against the Evil Dragons. The forest had been frozen over, and many blades grew out of the ground. There were also many black Evil Dragons and red fake Sekiryuutei flying about. There were explosions occurring all over the place. The mountain ranges had already become something completely different—. Aži Dahāka seemed displeased about it. He was using magic to view a projection, through which he watched the Trihexa in various locations, and the battles between the army of Evil Dragons and the various factions. He continued to watch it while asking Vali

[Say, Vali Lucifer. This place and the worlds of other mythologies are facing a scene of destruction — you could call it the scene of the Apocalypse. What do you see?]

[What do you think?]

[Honestly speaking, how does it feel?]

The two dragon heads on each side laughed as they asked Vali. Vali didn't reply, but Aži Dahāka nonchalantly continued

[If it was an ally of justice, they would've said something like "what

the hell did you do!” or “Unforgiveable! I’ll definitely defeat you!”, right? On the other hand, if it was someone evil, they’d say something like “Wahaha, this is a truly marvellous sight!” or perhaps “Behold, this is the end of the world that I desired!”.]

[I imitated exactly what Rizevim-kun or the Old Maou Faction would have done!]

[Please don’t get angry!]

Thinking that he would proceed while continuing to laugh, the next thing that he said was actually succinct and expressionless.

[I am different. —Well, so be it. …That’s just my impression.]

[Fufufu]

[That’s the same as what I was thinking!]

[This so-called destruction started from the era of the gods, and it’s something that never changes. Furthermore, most of the destruction stems from what the gods or monsters like me cause. What’s been done this time isn’t merely the mass destruction of mythologies, it could be said to be something far exceeding that. Anyway, if this goes on, the world will be led to its end.]

While saying that, Aži Dahāka looked up at the sky, and far into the distance. It was as if he was imagining a place that did not exist in this world.

[So, I thought that if another world existed, then there might be existences far beyond my imagination.]

Aži Dahāka turned his head back towards Vali, and said

[—A world where mechanical life forms known as [ExE][8] fight against spirits. Regardless of legends or literature, something like that has never been described before, could it be completely uncharted territory? Currently, all that is known is that there exists the Benevolent God that governs the spirits, Resetoras and the Malevolent God[9] Melvazoa who is responsible for the mechanical life forms. That world is divided in half and dominated by those two gods.]

—[ExE].

This was the first time that Vali had heard about information of another world. Mechanical life forms and…spirits. It was also the first time that he had even heard of the names of the gods from that side. Aži Dahāka laughed cheerfully.

[Kukuku, the world known as [E] is actually located beyond the existence known as [DxD][10], Great Red, don't you think that's something rather interesting?]

Upon seeing the legendary Evil Dragon laughing like a child, Vali couldn't stop himself from laughing.

"Heh, I never thought that you were like a child who adored fairy tales. A legendary Evil Dragon is actually talking about things from an unknown world."

Aži Dahāka acted almost like a child when he spoke about things from another world. Aži Dahāka then smiled mischievously as he said

[—It doesn't matter what kinds of fancy words those guys say. Conquering the world, remaking the world, just listening to it makes me laugh. They're just immature selfish brats with a grand words and are lost in their delusions. I am no different. But, my line of thought is even simpler. I just want to have a fight with strong foes, and if I'm able to see something rare, then that's even better. If that is called evil, then I'm satisfied with being evil. As an Evil Dragon, that's enough.]

[Darkness Dragon!]

[I – am – evil ♪]

"……"

Vali was caught up with an indescribable feeling. His opponent was evil. An absolute Evil Dragon. Yet also a legend among legends. He was known as one of the strongest Evil Dragons amongst all Evil Dragons. But why? The malice that he felt in front of him felt more fascinating and dangerous than anything he had felt before. Regardless of whether it was the Old Maou Faction, Hyoudou Issei, Cao Cao or Rizevim, they did everything for the sake of their beliefs or ambition. Their actions held no regard for their own limitations. However, Aži Dahāka…no, Apophis was probably also the same, these two Evil Dragons clearly understood themselves, and used this as a foundation to purely pursue destruction. What Vali had just

said to him simply caused Aži Dahāka to mock and laugh at himself.

[Heh, you said I was like a little brat. Indeed, I get told that a lot.]

But, Vali shook his head.

"…No, don't get the wrong idea, but being so pure and so simple makes me like you a little bit, Aži Dahāka."

After hearing Vali's reply, Aži Dahāka laughed with joy.

[Kukuku, Vali Lucifer. Shall we go at it once again? Let's have a bloody deathmatch. I can't help but feel excited as soon as I think about my opponent being one of the Two Heavenly Dragons!]

[The one who defeats the Heavenly Dragon gets a medal for being the strongest!]

[Evil Dragons are the strongest!]

After saying that, silence fell between the two of them. Aži Dahāka erased the projection, and aura seeped out from his entire body. His scorching hot aura caused all of the surrounding snow to melt. After a few seconds — both sides disappeared from their positions. They re-appeared in the sky. Vali released several waves of his aura at Aži Dahāka. His opponent put up a strong defensive magic circle and blocked all of the attacks directly. He then released several light magic attacks as a counterattack. Vali had inherited half of his blood from a Devil, so ordinary light magic was much less effective against him, but his opponent was an extraordinary existence, which made things a completely different matter. The light magic that Aži Dahāka released was a product of highly compressed magic, so if Vali took a direct hit, he would definitely be injured. Vali evaded them at high speed in the air, but the light magic seemed to have a will of its own as it continually chased him from behind. Vali planned to use the Hakuryuukou's ability, and halve their power. But, in order to obstruct Vali, Aži Dahāka continuously released light magic, making it impossible for him to determine the target.

[Reflect!!]

This time, Vali used the ability to reflect to send the light magic that was directed to himself backwards. However, their momentum didn't decrease even after being reflected, and they reverted back to their original path towards Vali. Taking advantage of this

opportunity, Aži Dahāka then used another type of magic. He created a countless number of magic circles in the sky. Fire, water, wind, lightning, and darkness; magic of various attributes were fired towards Vali all at once. The sky above the mountain range was filled with all of Aži Dahāka's magic circles, and Vali couldn't help feeling a jolt and chill run down his spine upon seeing this. Even for Vali, it was impossible for him to shoot them all down or halve them. Vali raised his own aura, and then unleashed the ability of the Hakuryuukou all around him.

[Half Dimension!!]

A powerful voice resounded, and the space around Vali became a field where everything was halved. The magic which was fired towards him was gradually halved, its power diminished, and by the time that it touched Vali's armour, it was so weak that it simply disappeared. Unfortunately, that was only a portion of it. Because magic of an unusual scale had been deployed, its direction was completely unknown, and they flew towards Vali one after another. The halving field was able to halve the magic that came towards it…but there was still a limit. Moreover, the light magic that was just chasing Vali was still present. While staying wary of the homing light magic, he had to continue to keep up the halving field while in-flight, both of which took up a significant portion of Vali's concentration. Vali eventually showed an opening, and the light magic struck his back! His armour was easily destroyed, hence the light magic burned Vali's back, and his flesh and blood scattered through the air. The severe pain tore through him and robbed him of his concentration, but he endured nonetheless and somehow continued to maintain the halving field…but Aži Dahāka's magic still continued! It showed no signs of stopping! All of the magic that he had released over four orders of magnitude, it was fifth-order magic. Even Vali was stunned. The capacity of this Evil Dragon's magic could no longer be described as simply incredible! It was enough to approach the level of gods! In their previous fight, he had clearly not used magic as intense as this! Even though there were far more magic circles than reason would dictate…they didn't normally attack continuously like this! At that time, Aži Dahāka exclaimed with glee!

[Well then, I'll start adding in my forbidden technique now!!!!]

[It's far from ordinary yo!]

[If you can defend against it, then show me!]

Just as he declared that, the crest of the magic circles that he created began to change! What emerged on all of the magic circles were ancient magic characters, a language that was forbidden. The magic circles emitted a dangerous glow as they distorted, and an electric current crackled through them. What appeared from the magic circles were — purple flames in the shape of a skull, cyclones with curses revolving around them, jet-black lightning, a cursed virgin Mary which was crying tears of blood, a one-eyed giant which seemed as if it would steal your life simply by looking at it, and various other different things…forbidden class attributes, summoning magic, curses, all of the ominous magic that existed in this world had been called forth, and all of it was moving towards Vali! If a direct hit was taken…it would definitely result in a death where not even any bones would remain! Vali raised his aura once again, and then recited the silver chant.

“I, who is about to awaken, am the Hakuryuukou who will take the law down to the darkness! I walk the road of domination with infinite destruction and by piercing through the imaginary dream! I shall become a pure Emperor of Dragon—”

“—And I shall have you obey the silvery-white illusions and the perfect evil ways!”

[Juggernaut Over Drive!!!!!!!!!!!!!]

After Vali quickly finished reciting the chant, he instantly transformed into [Empireo Juggernaut Overdrive][11]. The armour on his back was repaired. Even if he had an absolute power, it wasn’t certain that he would be able to overcome that forbidden technique! Vali opened his arms, and increased his power again and again. He planned to take on that myriad of ominous symbols directly. He increased the power of halving around himself, and then unleashed it!

[Compression Divider!!!!!!]

This was the ultimate ability that was able to compress all matter, no, it was even able to compress dreams. Moreover, he was releasing it at full power this time. This was the ultimate ability that once destroyed the Ultimate-Class Grim Reaper Pluto. Even Aži Dahāka’s forbidden technique could be compressed. The magic which darted towards Vali was compressed over and over again, until it became so small that it couldn’t become any smaller and was then eliminated. All of the forbidden techniques which

pounded down on Vali were destroyed. Aži Dahāka's magic attacks then stopped. It wasn't because he had run out of magic energy, but because he felt ecstatic from seeing Vali's spectacular battle. On the other hand, Vali had forcibly transformed back; as a price for using the power, both his magic energy and stamina had been severely depleted. Even for Vali, he was unable to adapt to this form. He was already breathing very heavily. Vali quietly flew towards Aži Dahāka, and confronted him once again. When Vali landed on the ground, his consciousness became disorderly for a moment, causing him to kneel on the ground with one knee. …The consumption was even more draining than he thought.

—Strong. He's far above Rizevim.

[Aži Dahāka has already reached the class of a Heavenly Dragon.]

Albion said.

…I see, Albion has recognised that he has already become an existence on par with the strongest Two Heavenly Dragons. That's why he's so strong. Like Crom Cruach, who has reached the class of the Heavenly Dragons through training, Aži Dahāka has also enhanced his own strength after being resurrected, and finally reached the level of the Heavenly Dragons. Thinking about it this way, it's also easy to imagine that the same would be true for Apophis.

He had become far stronger since their previous battle. Although the nakama of his team were present at the moment, they wouldn't be able to wound him either. He didn't seem to have the intent to fight right now, as all of his attacks were able to reach him. It was unimaginable that he, the one who had been renowned as the Strongest Hakuryuukou was cornered into a situation where he could only defend right now. The unexpected result caused Vali to smile wryly. Aži Dahāka then happily said

[Since this is how it is, it'll be fine if you use Albion's true power. —I really want to see the true power of yours that caused you to be revered as the Poison Dragon Emperor you know, Albion? No, Gwiber?]

[Albion Gwiber!]

[Gwiber is Gwiber!]

…They were actually able to say that name…. Indeed, he was an

Evil Dragon that had existed since ancient times. He definitely knew about the Hakuryuukou's history. Just as Aži Dahāka said, the Hakuryuukou Albion did have the name of Gwiber in the past. In the Welsh language, it meant 'poisonous snake'. Although Albion and his rival Ddraig had never mentioned it before, the Hakuryuukou, the White Dragon was a dragon that used poison. Despite possessing a beautiful pure white body, he had a hideous poison that even gods were afraid of; it was something within Albion's body that he hated and cursed.

[…That name and power have already been sealed.]

Albion replied through the gem to deny Aži Dahāka. Aži Dahāka then laughed.

[But, precisely because you had that power, the gods of various factions feared and avoided you, right? Your graceful pure white body had a highly toxic poison that even gods feared…I like that, you know? It's such an ironic power.]

[I want to see the poisonous you!]

[I want to see the deadly poison!]

While Aži Dahāka was provoking him, Albion was in a complex state of mind that even Vali noticed. Albion denied himself as one who had once used toxic poison, and even hated speaking of it, not even Vali was allowed to bring that topic up. Vali himself believed that even if he didn't have that power, the Hakuryuukou's power was enough, which is why he had never mentioned it…. But, even though he hated his sofu[12], he still proudly carried the name of Lucifer and at the same time, Vali also felt that Albion's own values and ideas had begun to change while he was with him day and night. The deeper reason for that was the current Sekiryuutei; the figure of Hyoudou Issei was beyond common sense and that had a great influence on Albion. Thus, he also suffered from a sickness of the mind. But—. The opportunities for him to communicate with Ddraig had increased as a result of the exceptional contact between Vali and Hyoudou Issei. In that regard, Albion's view of the world changed. Seeing Vali's expression, Aži Dahāka tilted his head and said

[…I've always felt that you and the Sekiryuutei resemble each other in some way, you know? —If I had to state the reason, it would be that both of you have the eyes of wanting to protect something.

Moreover, it isn't about wanting to protect your own pride, you have those eyes only because you want to protect someone special to you. —Is it a woman?]

…I never imaged that an Evil Dragon would see through me.

Vali slightly curled the corner of his mouth as he laughed.

"…If you're saying it's a woman, then it is indeed. However, she's not a lover. She's just, someone…who has care of me before. I won't be like Hyoudou Issei and try to protect so many people. I've also never thought about it in that way."

When he came to this place to fight, that person and that family kept appearing within Vali's mind. It was a very happy looking haha, imouto, and otouto—[13]. If this was to continue, Trihexa and Aži Dahāka's malice would surely reach that side. Such a thing — he could not allow. It was something that he absolutely could not allow. Vali continued

"But there is a small human family, which has the people that I want to protect. Do you disdain me? Or do you think I'm just an ordinary weakling? I personally think that having such thoughts isn't too bad."

Aži Dahāka made a wry smile. It wasn't a smile of ridicule. He joyfully accepted what Vali had said.

[Kukuku, I've fought against people like you who believe in their minds that they are the last line for those precious in their minds several times. —Without exception, all of them were formidable enemies. So, I don't feel a trace of contempt for you at all! In fact, I think you're someone even stronger than they are!]

In an instant, Aži Dahāka created a magic circle. The surrounding landscape was completely rewritten. Vali readied his stance…but he immediately realised that this wasn't the type of magic used for direct attacks. The surrounding scenery…continued to distort. Vali was then absorbed into it….

—Finally, Vali entered the illusionary world that Aži Dahāka created.

Part 3

—He awoke to realise that this was a strange room that he had never seen before. He also understood that he was sleeping on a bed.

—Suddenly, he felt his body become heavier. It felt as if someone was sitting on top of him. Looking towards that place, he saw that a boy was sitting on top of him. It was a boy that looked very similar to him. When the boy saw that Vali had awoken, he looked at him with a smile.

“Onii-chan woke up!”

It was a very cheerful boy. After that, a girl then entered the room. She also looked quite like himself. The girl scolded the boy

“Mou! You can’t forcibly wake onii-chan up like that!”

While Vali remained confused, the boy pulled Vali by the arm as they exited the room.

“Onii-chan! It’s time to eat! You can’t stay in bed all day!”

Vali was still puzzled, but nodded ‘ah…’. The boy then walked in front, while he followed behind. The destination was the living room. The sound of running water could be heard from the kitchen. Someone in the kitchen then noticed Vali, and came out to the living room. Upon seeing that person, Vali felt so nervous that he stopped breathing.

“Ara, Vali, you woke up? You were preparing for your exam until quite late last night. University students really have it tough.”

The haha who showed a smile — stood in front of him.

…So that’s it, I understand now.

The true identity of the boy who woke him up and the girl — they were his younger brother and younger sister. Yet at the same time, he realised that this was all an illusion. But, when looking at his haha’s face, he felt pained somewhere in his heart. Regardless of whether it was talking to haha, or realising that this was just an illusion, it made him feel distraught.

“I’ll go and prepare the food.”

Mother said that, and then returned to preparing breakfast.

Vali sat down at his seat. And like a sandwich, his otouto and imouto sat on each side of him. Placed on top of the dining table was very ordinary home cooking. Bread and soup, potato wedges, salad, all of these were items that Vali had seen before on television.

“““Itadakimasu!”””[14]

After saying that, his haha, otouto and imouto began eating their breakfast. Seeing that Vali still looked confused, his otouto asked

“Oni-chan, are you not eating?”

Haha tilted her head and asked

“Ara, could it be that you don’t have an appetite?”

“N-No, itadakimasu.”

Vali picked up the spoon to drink the soup, and began to feel emotional.

—It’s so warm, and delicious.

While eating his breakfast, the voice of the Evil Dragon was heard.

[This is the false world that I created. This magic barrier will create the world based on the deepest desires of your heart. The scene before your eyes is the world that you truly desire.]

The voice resounded through his mind. Indeed, this was an illusionary world—. Moreover, this was the world that he wanted —. Aži Dahāka continued

[I see. Known as the strongest Hakuryuukou in history, what you want is, an extremely ordinary, and common family.]

……Vali didn’t have any reply to that.

…In the inner depths of my mind, I actually wanted to have a family….

After finishing breakfast, his otouto pulled Vali’s hand.

“Onii-chan! Let’s go out to play soccer!”

This time, his imouto also grabbed hold of Vali’s hand.

“You can’t! Onii-chan is helping me to study today!”

“Play with me!”

“Study with me!”

Seeing his otouto and imouto pulling Vali’s hands, haha laughed.

“Come on, if you two don’t stop, you’re going to pull onii-chan’s arms off, you know?”

His own otouto and imouto were competing over him, and his haha was laughing as she watched all of this—. In the end, he helped imouto study first, and then went to play soccer with onii-chan afterwards. After helping his imouto to study history, he played soccer with his otouto until evening, and following that, the three siblings washed the dishes together with their haha. Seeing the figure of his haha and otouto conversing happily with each other in front of him, Vali also began to smile at some point. At that time, Aži Dahāka’s voice was heard again.

[If you want to continue living in this world, then it’s possible, you know? This barrier was made for that purpose. When the world that they so strongly sought was placed in front of them, dozens, hundreds, and thousands of strong warriors fell like that.]

…I see, so Aži Dahāka used such powerful magic.

While immersed in combat, the warriors and heroes each had things that were precious to them, or perhaps once had. Being able to reproduce it to this extent — it was understandable that some people’s willpower would crumble. Vali had spent a night in this world. At night, he slept together with his otouto and imouto on one bed. It was the first time since Vali was born…that he slept together with his family. It was actually so tranquil that he felt deeply moved. The next day, he got up early and they ate breakfast together. A family of four was eating as they conversed with each other. All of this buried his loneliness…. After breakfast, the family of four sat together and played board games. While his otouto and imouto were arguing, haha amusedly laughed. It was such a gentle and peaceful world—. There was no fighting, it was just time spent happily together with his family members—. Time flowed by gently, and from the depths of his heart, a smile emerged on Vali’s face, and then — he stood up. His otouto and imouto were surprised.

“Onii-chan? What’s wrong?”

“Onii-chan? Are you feeling unwell anywhere?”

Two people looked up at his face.

—At some point, Vali could no longer hold back the emotions welling up inside of him, and he began to cry.

So there really is such happiness…. This is…the ordinary happiness obtained from an ordinary family….

This was the first time that he had ever received—. But, regardless of whether it was fortunate or unfortunate for Vali, he was able to clearly realise that this was an illusion, it was a false and never-ending power. The time that elapsed in here was nothing but a few seconds in reality.

Immersing myself in days like these, how fortunate would I be—. Immersing myself in a world like this, how happy would I be—.

While shedding tears, Vali tightly hugged his otouto and imouto.

“…I am…”

I don’t even know your names—. I can’t even call out to you—.

So, I know that this is a false world. At that time, I didn’t meet you; saying this is ironic but that has also become an important factor in denying this world.

Vali spoke gently

“Onii-chan has somewhere that he must go. He can’t be with you… I’m really sorry for not being able to play together with you. — Sorry.”

A dream is fine. An illusion is fine. Even so, we met each other. We also touched each other. It’s the first time since I was born that I was able to spend time together with an ordinary family.

“Even if this is a dream, or an illusion, to be able to meet you…and speak to you is truly good. With this, I — no matter how many thousands or ten thousands of years, I will continue to fight on, and survive…!”

Once more, he tightly hugged the otouto and imouto within the

illusion.

In order to firmly remember this warmth—.

“…I’m really sorry that I didn’t call out your names. —But, I need to go now, so that I can protect you—”

After separating from those two people, Vali turned around to face the door. He wanted to tell his saddened haha.

Even if this is an illusion, it’s good that I was able to speak with you one more time, and be able to spend time with you—.

“Kaa-san, we probably won’t be able to see each other ever again… we won’t be able to speak to each other ever again, but I will protect you from afar, and watch over my otouto and imouto.”

If he hugged haha right now, he definitely wouldn’t be able to return to reality.

So…so, I can’t touch you. If I touch you, then I’ll….

Vali showed mother his most earnest smile.

“So, thank you. You were able to talk to me one more time. Even if this is an illusion, this is enough for me. I will definitely protect you —”

Vali turned the doorknob.

“—Goodbye. I’m heading out.”

—Goodbye, my family.

After opening the door, waiting in front of him was the figure of his chichi. It wasn’t the chichi who abused him, nor was it the chichi of his otouto and imouto. It was probably the ‘chichi’ that Vali truly desired and that was reflected by the magic technique.

Indeed, looking closely—.

No matter how much he verbally denied it, he confirmed in his mind once again what he truly thought. However, it was not uncomfortable.

“Are you going?”

“Yes, I need to go, Azazel. I always thought that meeting you in reality was one of the best things that happened to me. I am — Vali Lucifer.”

Return—.

Return to the world where my nakama, rival, and Azazel are waiting for me—.

Part 4

The false world collapsed, and what appeared before his eyes again was the scenery of snow-covered mountains. The three-headed Evil Dragon standing in front of Vali asked

[…That was a nice dream, right?]

Vali replied with a splendid smile

“……Yeah, it was the best dream.”

Aži Dahāka’s attitude immediately changed, as his expression became very serious while he expressed his respect towards Vali

[Hakuryuukou Vali, you were actually able to get away from my techniques. I deeply apologise for putting you into that lowly technique of mine. I recognise you as my greatest and most worthy opponent!]

When Vali noticed that Aži Dahāka’s attitude was completely different to his previous playfulness, he began to feel pumped up with fighting spirit. Aži Dahāka knew that this powerful illusionary world was capable of siphoning a warrior’s willpower away, and fascinating them. The people who were able to return from there were truly brave people.

“The same goes for the both of us, Aži Dahāka. I also feel from the bottom of my heart that my battle with you has a lot of pride! I will defeat you, all of you guys, and definitely protect that family!”

As Vali shouted that out, he began to feel happy, as the uncertainties that previously occupied his mind were blown away,

and had now become clear.

—I need to protect them.

Swearing upon that, Vali began to feel excited both physically and mentally, and then noticed a sudden and dramatic within his own heart.

[Vali. Within the illusionary world, I gained insight into your consciousness. —So, I think that I will also pick up the name the name that I once discarded once again.]

Albion also accepted himself—. All of them gems on his armour released a gentle warmth and bright glow which had never manifested before. While being submersed in this light, it also caused him to remember the warmth that he received in that illusionary world. At that time, a certain voice echoed out from the depths of the Sacred Gear.

[—li, Vali, my voice, can you hear it?]

It was Ophis' voice. She should be recuperating in the Gremory territory of the Underworld. However, ignoring all of this, Vali heard Ophis' call. It was probably her consciousness being transmitted over while she was asleep. Ophis continued

[Ise and I have chanted together before. So now it's Vali's turn. —Chant together with me.]

—Chant, huh. If I'm going to chant together with you, it must be something great.

[It is different from the time when Ise used my power. Vali has recognised himself, and Albion has also accepted himself, so this is my encouragement. All I need to do is lend a hand.]

It was truly reassuring that the Dragon God-sama would actually extend a hand to help him.

[—Vali, thank you for talking with me.]

At one point, Ophis was the leader of [Khaos Brigade]…but regardless of whether it was Shalba or Cao Cao, all they gave Ophis was loneliness—.

If you're satisfied with me, then I can be your conversation partner

anytime—. That hasn't changed even now.

Ah, I see. Perhaps these are the so-called 'friends'.

[I will also chant, Vali, Ophis.]

Albion added in from the side. And so, this was the chant of a trio of friends and partners, a Dragon God, Heavenly Dragon and Lucifer —.

"The pure White Dragon dwelling within me, rise up from your supremacy—"

The silver armour that exceeded supremacy — gradually began to form jet-black patterns on it.

[The silvery-white Morning Star I possess within me, claim the throne of Dawn—]

In response to Albion's chant, the wings of light on his back — became infused with black. Following that, pair after pair of new wings extended out from his back.

"—The jet-black God of Infinity"

Vali's line came after Ophis' line.

[—The mysterious and unfathomable father of Devils]

Twelve jet-black wings grew out of Vali's back, all of the edges of his armour sharpened, and became something with an organic form. Vali's and Albion's voices then overlapped with each other.

"[—We shall transcend the limits to accept the oath]"

The crest of Lucifer appeared on all of the gems of his armour, and unleashed a dazzling brilliance! The final line was chanted by Vali, Albion and Ophis as a trio.

"—Thou shalt kneel down before our bright and glorious existence!"

[[[LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLucifer!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!]]]

The sound that echoed out from all of the gems seemed like a malfunction. And then, a powerful and majestic voice rang out!

Dragon Lucifer Drive!!!!!!!!

As if in response to that, his entire armour emitted a dazzling radiance, and his aura also swelled up! …After his aura finished rising, what appeared in its place was a brand new Hakuryuukou with twelve jet-black wings. The armour was composed of silvery-white and jet-black tones, and part of it was also like the flesh of the Dragon of Supremacy. Its smooth and beautiful exterior was enough to cause one to fall into a daze simply by looking at it. With dense silver and black aura, aura waves of the Hakuryuukou and Lucifer were radiated out from his entire body. Vali said

“The power of the Hakuryuukou Albion Gwiber and the power of the Maou Lucifer, this is the form that I have awakened by combining these two as one…Aži Dahāka, I will defeat you!”

Aži Dahāka became even more ecstatic upon seeing Vali’s transformation.

[If the Sekiryuutei has undergone Dragon Deification, then this is the Hakuryuukou’s corresponding Maouification!]

Indeed, if Hyoudou Issei’s transformation was called Dragon Deification, then his transformation was Maouification. As the possessor of the power of the Maou Lucifer and the Hakuryuukou, he awakened both of them and then embedded his own oath into the chant. That was because when he began this chant, Vali had the strong determination ‘to protect someone’ in his heart. Upon seeing Vali’s transformation to become an even more formidable opponent, Aži Dahāka conveyed his admiration.

[…Truly strong, this is the ultimate power. That idiot Rizevim was just an imposter of the Maou Lucifer. You are the true Lucfier. I was right about that. The successor of the [True Maou], Vali Lucifer!]

“—Yeah, I can stand tall and say that proudly from the bottom of my heart right now. I can say it with certainty.”

Vali spread open his twelve jet-black wings as his armour released a silvery-white lustre and he shouted

“—My name is Lucifer. The inheritor of the Maou’s blood, Vali Lucifer!”

After hearing that, all three of Aži Dahāka’s heads let loose a deafening roar. In order to elevate himself to his strongest state, the

legendary Evil Dragon opened his two wings.

[Indeed! Even if you share the name of Lucifer, when compared to that idiot Rizevim, I definitely like you more, Vali Lucifffeeeeeeeeerrrr!]

“—What a coincidence, me too, compared to Rizevim, you’re a hundred times better!”

Both sides flew into the air at the same time! The Maouified Vali flapped his twelve wings of Lucifer, which caused all of the snow in the surrounding area to melt instantaneously, and even the rock below became exposed. The Lucifer and Aži Dahāka flying above the ground began to clash with each other in mid-air. Vali sharply thrust his hand out and released a jolt of demonic energy. Aži Dahāka instantly activated teleportation magic, and evaded it. —But, Vali decimated the entire mountaintop that Aži Dahāka had evaded to. Under such circumstances, it was possible to cause mass destruction simply by unleashing his demonic energy towards his direction, and due to his immense power, even escaping from it was highly difficult. While relying on teleportation magic to increase their distance, Aži Dahāka felt surprised by Vali who was easily destroying mountaintops, but at the same time, he also felt joy.

[This is seriously amazing! That previous attack was way too relaxed.]

[This is really quite scary!]

[What outrageous power!]

Vali channelled his power into his wings of Lucifer.

[[[LLLL

Hyoudou Issei. Wherever he was, he still strongly acknowledged his rival, and thus Vali began to laugh underneath his armour at the irony of it. Small-sized dragons — wyverns. A total of twelve were currently circling around Vali.

“Go!”

Heeding Vali’s command, they moved in accordance with their master’s intentions and the wyverns darted towards Aži Dahāka. The body of one particular wyvern changed into a cannon, and from there — it fired a powerful shot of Lucifer’s aura! The three heads of Aži Dahāka each emitted a strange glow. Miniature magic circles expanded out from his eyes, and they completely blocked the aura that had been fired out by the wyvern. It was almost the same as what Gasper Vladi could do. No, it was different. Perhaps this was a reproduction of the original magic of the Demon God Balor’s Evil Eyes.

Being able to use magic of various attributes, he was an Evil Dragon that was even capable of freely using space and time magic, and Vali had no choice but to commend that. However, Vali still continued to allow the wyverns to fire out the aura of Lucifer. Aži Dahāka easily dodged the attacks in mid-air. But the wyverns which appeared behind him reflected the attacks back towards him while emitting the sound [Reflect!!]! However, the Evil Dragon had already prepared defensive magic circles behind himself, and they securely protected him. A kite-pattern then rotated in mid-air, and deployed a variety of magic circles in the air, which caused the entire sky above the mountains to be covered in magic circles once again.

[How about a taste of this!]

Aži Dahāka combined various attributes and types of magic as he released more than a thousand of them all at once. Magic of a fifth-order level swept across the entire area at full power. Vali ordered the wyverns to stay in front of himself so that he could face the situation, but—.

[There’s still more to come!]

Immediately after unleashing a full-powered blast, Aži Dahāka vanished without a trace through the use of space teleportation magic. When he reappeared, a dozen, twenty, and eventually more than a hundred clones produced from illusion magic had been

made! Moreover, each of these clones looked exactly the same as the original as they activated a countless number of magic circles, and released an immeasurable number of attribute magic attacks. There were even forbidden techniques included within them. From the very beginning when his initial attacks started out, up until the magic that was released by his clones afterwards, the aura of magic could be felt from all of them. Which ones were illusions? No, if this was the magic expert Aži Dahāka who was second to none among dragons — then it wouldn't be surprising at all if all of these were the real thing! After coming to such a conclusion, Vali explosively increased his own power, and when it reached its peak, he instantly released it from his entire body!

[[[LLLL

Hakuryuukou.

[Half Dimension!!]

The wyverns used the power which caused all matter in their surroundings to be halved.

[Shit! Even the small ones can use that!?]

Even Aži Dahāka failed to think that the wyverns were able to use that absolute power. Having been obstructed by the halving field for a moment, that moment was enough to ensure that Vali would be able to successfully strike him with his demonic energy. But just in the nick of time, Aži Dahāka avoided a direct hit by using teleportation magic to escape. Vali's blast of demonic energy lost its target, and collided with the tall mountain in the distance. With a loud boom, the five thousand metre tall mountain was instantly decimated—.

Vali turned his gaze towards Aži Dahāka, who had managed to increase the distance between them. —One of Aži Dahāka's heads, his left head had been blown away, and he had also lost his left wing. It seemed like he hadn't safely evaded that last attack. While floating in the sky, Vali proudly spread open his twelve wings of Lucifer, and released a silvery-white and jet-black light. Aži Dahāka couldn't help muttering to himself.

[—Dawn of the Morning Star.]

That was a name that embodied Lucifer. When Aži Dahāka saw the current Vali, he clearly addressed him as such. Vali's current power was already far beyond Maou-class. It had become Heavenly Dragon-class, and this power which was pushing Aži Dahāka into a tight corner could no longer even be compared to the first generation Lucifer. However, Aži Dahāka, who was capable of fighting with Vali as an opponent was also an absolute monster. It was not surprising that this Evil Dragon was not one to simply bow down to someone like Rizevim. In addition, both Vali and Aži Dahāka were enjoying the thrill of battle, as they each held respect for each other. As enemies, they both enjoyed the calibre of each other's strength.

—At that time, something out of place flew towards this battlefield. They were mass-produced Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei. They had probably detected the commotion occurring here and deliberately flew over. Seeing this — Aži Dahāka seemed unusually

annoyed.

[DON'T INTERFERE WITH MY BATTLE!]

While shouting that out, he activated a magic circle, and various types of magic flew towards the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei that were his subordinates.

[……Damn it, not even these things can understand the essence of a fight. I never thought that Grendel would interfere with us again!]

Indeed, when he first fought against Aži Dahāka, Grendel interfered, and so their battle had only gotten halfway before it was hastily ended. At that time, Aži Dahāka looked quite displeased, and Vali hadn't forgotten either. Aži Dahāka even forgot about Vali, as he let his anger explode out towards Grendel. This one time, Vali agreed with Aži Dahāka. He sent the wyverns out towards the mass-produced Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei. The wyverns approached the mass-produced Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei, and then oozed out a dangerous aura.

[Venom!!]

A dreadful sound rang out. Appearing around the wyverns was a dense curse that was clearly visible. Shortly afterwards — the mass-produced Evil Dragons writhed about in mid-air painfully, and then finally spurted out big mouthfuls of blood as they fell to the ground. Upon seeing this, Aži Dahāka seemed immensely interested.

[All of the Evil Dragons are experiencing immense pain? …Ho, then this is…!]

Vali said

"What you wanted to see, Albion's…Gwiber's poison — that is [Reduce]."

Albion's abilities are — to 'halve' any object, with the 'halved' portion being 'absorbed' as his own, as well as being able to 'reflect' his opponent's power. In addition, there is also 'reduce'. Albion… no, Albion Gwiber said

[My poison is able to reduce all existences aside from inorganic objects. As long as it's a living being, its blood, bones, organs, and soul can be cut down bit by bit, so even for extraordinary beings, everything in their bodies can be 'reduced'.]

After the mass-produced Evil Dragons were tainted with the poison that the wyverns released, everything within their bodies began to be ‘reduced’. As a result, they received fatal injuries, and fell to the ground. This was the poison of Albion that even god-class beings feared—. Albion continued

[The single existence that this poison is ineffective against is — the [Welsh Dragon][15] Sekiryuutei Y Ddraig Goch.]

Because he was said to be invincible and poisonous, he was always lonely. Because no one wanted to get close to him, no one was his rival. More accurately, even without the use of poison, Albion was an overwhelmingly powerful existence, and there were very few opponents who could stand equally against him. However, after meeting Ddraig, Albion’s thoughts and values changed.

—There was actually such a powerful dragon, and I want to become stronger with him. I want to become a brave and fearless dragon on par with him.

Albion thought about becoming a powerful dragon directly, instead of resorting to poison. To Great Red and the still infinite Ophis, that poison was useless. However, aside from existences such as them, it was effective even against gods, and Albion knew that with certainty. Even so, Albion — pursued abilities other than poison. They were [Divide] and [Reflect]. Looking at the results, Albion had successfully developed new abilities without relying on [Reduce]. If he had not encountered Ddraig, Albion would have been a dragon who only had the ability of the poisonous [Reduce]. Precisely because he encountered Ddraig who was immune to poison, Albion improved himself, changed himself, and progressed to the next level. This was the same for Ddraig. Precisely because he was a worthy opponent, he always remained in pursuit of further strength. Hence, these two dragons eventually became renowned as the Two Heavenly Dragons—.

[You’re not going to use it on me?]

Aži Dahāka asked Albion.

[I’ve already told you before. This is a power that has already been discarded. Ddraig and I rely on our claws, fangs, ambition, and aura; we rely on our pure power to fight and enhance each other! Since I’m known as one of the Two Heavenly Dragons alongside Ddraig, poison is not a necessary thing to me!]

Vali briefly laughed.

“That’s right. We believe that our current power is enough. Or is there something that you’re not satisfied with about our current power, Aži Dahāka?”

Vali’s defiant question caused Aži Dahāka to — laugh loudly. It was more clear and concise than words. Both sides once again resumed their battle in mid-air as they hurtled towards each other! Aži Dahāka’s magic covered the surrounding area, and the aura that was released from Vali’s light of Lucifer deeply carved apart the mountains. The mountains in this area suffered from immense damage as a result of the battle between Lucifer and the Evil Dragon. Although Vali’s power of Lucifer was overwhelming, Aži Dahāka’s magic was also incomparably powerful. The flames of the forbidden techniques spread across Vali’s armour, and a section of it burst apart. —Nonetheless, Vali wasn’t the only one to be on the receiving side of damage. He fired out the demonic energy of Lucifer towards Aži Dahāka’s right head. When their distance was shrunk as close as it could possibly be, Vali channelled demonic energy into his fist, and performed a flurry of punches. The Evil Dragon’s abdomen suffered a series of continuous attacks. Aži Dahāka spat out large volumes of blood. But his will to fight didn’t decrease at all. As a counterattack, he kicked Vali and knocked him back a fair distance. In order to cause even more damage to Aži Dahāka, Vali—

[Half Dimension!!]

He activated the halving field. Because he had been immensely weakened, Aži Dahāka knelt down on one knee under the pressure of this powerful field…but he still activated a magic circle to fight back against Vali! Vali controlled the wyverns, and a large amount of Lucifer’s aura erupted from them. Aži Dahāka withstood all of it; he didn’t activate any defensive magic circles, but instead used attribute magic to counterattack. Even with his entire body covered in blood, Aži Dahāka did not stop attacking. He immediately used healing magic to regenerate his heads, and heal the rest of his wounds. Healing magic…there were very few people who used it, but it also belonged to the highest class of magic. Particularly magic which was used to regenerate parts of the body that had been lost, if one didn’t possess an abnormal amount of magic power and use forbidden techniques, it was absolutely impossible. In other words, Aži Dahāka used both of these at the same time. Of course, there was also a great risk. The power to regenerate body parts should

require some kind of sacrifice. Was it lifespan, or—. However, for the powerful Evil Dragon in question, something like lifespan was meaningless. While using the power of Lucifer, although Vali felt that his stamina was gradually being depleted, he didn't hesitate and liberally used the full force of the Maou's power to attack Aži Dahāka. Because Aži Dahāka had to defend against such intense attacks, or perhaps due to his own previous attacks, his magical energy was rapidly being exhausted. Even if he did possess what was renowned as a limitless reserve of magical energy, it was constantly being cut down under the power of this new generation Maou Lucifer—.

In the end, Aži Dahāka no longer even had enough magical energy to use healing magic—. His left and right heads which had been blown away several times no longer regenerated. Both of his wings were also full of holes. Kneeling down with one knee on the ground, he was breathing heavily and strenuously. …Vali was also breathing heavily, and his armour had not been able to repair itself. The enemy before him was so challenging that he didn't have enough headroom to repair his armour.

[It's not over yet!]

Aži Dahāka speedily flew over, and used his last remaining head to bite Vali. If he couldn't use magic, then he would use his body! This persistent will to fight surprised even Vali. Vali attempted to evade, but the enormous stamina consumption on his body from using this form was too great, so he was a step too late and was unable to dodge the attack. Aži Dahāka chomped down on Vali. His razor sharp fangs caused his armour to be crushed, and they mercilessly dug into his flesh. The thought of death flashed across his mind. This was the last move that his opponent had made in order to determine the winner. In that moment, what appeared in Vali's mind were — the faces of his haha, otouto and imouto.

—I can't lose. I can't afford to lose! —Because I swore that I would protect them!

Vali — increased his own power, and dedicated it all to settling the match in one final attack! He spread open his black wings of Lucifer. The armour on his chest and abdomen rattled as they separated and slid open. What appeared there was — the muzzle of a cannon that was ready to fire. Oooo…it quietly emitted a charging sound as aura gathered at the muzzle of the cannon. In order to prevent him from escaping, Vali grabbed onto Aži Dahāka

tightly. His fangs dug in even deeper into his body, and the pain pulsed throughout his entire body…but even so, he continued to focus his aura towards the muzzle of the cannon. After a vast amount of demonic energy had been gathered, Vali said to the legendary Evil Dragon

“This is the end.”

[[[LLLL

Leaving behind only these words, the legendary Evil Dragon, the [Diabolism Thousand Dragon] — Aži Dahāka's body disappeared. …But, even if only a tiny piece of an Evil Dragon's soul remained, they were able to remain within this world. There would eventually come a day where he would fight against his worthy opponent, as an evil spirit, and also as an Evil Dragon—. He truly was a powerful enemy. A formidable Evil Dragon. It was the first time that Vali had felt such a profound emotion of victory. To speak of the reason, it was because he could have lost during that battle, even after Maouification.

"…Yeah, I sincerely look forward to it. My worthy opponent, Aži Dahāka."

The death match finally ended.

Part 5

Vali returned to the battlefield where his nakama were fighting. Looking towards that location from the sky, there were massive black blades everywhere, and everything had also been frozen. The Trihexa which had been halted was still intact, but it was motionless. His nakama were currently still fighting against the mass-produced Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei…but a certain phenomenon did not occur. Indeed, originally, the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei that had been cut down to a certain number would be restored to their original amount. But, if he didn't think wrongly, their numbers were indeed being reduced one by one.

"…The Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei…haven't increased any further?"

While Vali muttered that to himself, a voice answered from behind him.

"Yeah, that was reported a short while ago. —Gasper and Valerie succeeded. Now, the Evil Dragons that are attacking various territories will be defeated all at once."

Looking back — Azazel had imperceptibly joined the battle at some point.

“Azazel…”

All of a sudden, Vali remembered the illusion that Aži Dahāka had shown him again.

……Chichi…huh.

Vali shook his head. …However, it was understandable that he would think like that right now. Upon seeing Vali’s new form, Azazel was both surprised and happy.

“So this is the appearance that you’ve chosen huh. It’s truly amazing. It seems even more like Lucifer than Rizevim.”

—Hmm.

…I wonder why?

When Azazel said ‘like Lucifer’, he felt a little bit embarrassed, yet also happy. Vali turned around as he said

“Aži Dahāka also told me the same thing.”

After Azazel heard that, he burst into laughter.

“Hahaha, it seems like Rizevim would be considerably annoyed. Also, there isn’t anyone who could possibly like him!”

Bikou then flew over, riding on his cloud.

“Hey Vali, former Governor! Wow, you powered up again!”

Seeing the change in his own leader, he was so surprised that even his eyes popped out. He then began to laugh. Looking closely, the Vali Team and Slash Dog team below them had gathered together and came towards them. Vali, Bikou and Azazel all descended together. Both teams happily greeted Vali. Kuroka revealed a fearless smile as she came over to ask

“Well well, did you use your full power to fight?”

Vali replied

“Yeah, I fought at full power just like you said. But Trihexa will eventually start moving again, right? It doesn’t seem like it’s over with just that.”

Indeed, the feeling of a premonition still remained. He could still feel a strange pressure being exuded from Trihexa, even though it had been stopped. Not only Azazel, but his other nakama also turned their gazes towards Trihexa with eyes of caution. Azazel said to everyone

“If everything ended just like this, then the Imperial Beast of the Apocalypse would really be too kind. It doesn’t matter, I’ll think of a countermeasure when the time comes. For now, just wipe out all of the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei around us. Can you guys do it?”

Everyone strongly answered with ‘Yeah!’ in response to the Fallen Angel. When the battle resumed again, Vali noticed that Azazel’s attitude was concerning.

—Absolute determination.

That was all he could feel. Of all the people present, he was the only one who could understand that. Although they had not spent more than ten years together…he was able to read something out of Azazel’s expression. He would notice his facial expressions and attitude when interacting with Azazel rather naturally. He never understood what he wanted to do. He was unable to fully understand that genius who naturally loved mischief.

But—.

Whenever Azazel wanted to do something, he could feel it. Vali felt that the current Azazel ‘felt satisfied by being resolutely prepared for something’—.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ Kanji was Forbidden Dragon of Magic Origin.
2. ↑ Kanji was Eternal Ice Princess.
3. ↑ The magical staff which can extend and contract.
4. ↑ Younger sister.
5. ↑ Kanji was Dog God of the the Black Blade.
6. ↑ Kanji was Mad Blade Dog God of the Glowing Night Sky.
7. ↑ Kanji was Dark Demon Beast of the Abyss, Dog God of the

Hero's Eternal Night Blade. The kana reads as latin, with a very rough meaning being something along the lines of: Perfect Darkness Werewolf and Brave Dense Laelaps. Laelaps is a Greek mythological dog that never failed to catch what it hunted. Zeus turned it into stone and cast it into the stars as the Canis Major constellation.

8. ↑ Kana was Evie Etoulde. Closest guess as neither word seems to have any significant meaning or matches. All instances of ExE are read as Evie Etoulde.
9. ↑ Kana was Jashin. Keeping this in line with EX for consistency.
10. ↑ Kana was Dragon of Dragon.
11. ↑ Kanji was Silver Dragon of Great Supremacy.
12. ↑ Sofu: Grandfather.
13. ↑ Mother, younger sister, and younger brother respectively.
14. ↑ Can be interpreted as: Thanks for the food.
15. ↑ Kanji was Red Dragon.

Last.DxD Ani and Otouto [1] —United Front—

In order to chase after Apophis, who landed on the uninhabited island, I, Hyoudou Issei also landed on that island. On top of a rock ridge of that island, I faced a tan-skinned youth who was wearing vestments. Based on his appearances alone, he looked human…but the aura that I felt from him was unusually powerful. It was an aura unique to dragons. Apophis smiled as he welcomed my arrival.

<<So my opponent is you, Sekiryuutei. This is truly a great honour.>>

"Yo — Apophis-san. You're supposed to be one of the strongest Evil Dragons, right?"

<<Fufufu, at the very least, I'm a lot stronger than that barbaric Grendel.>>

…Well, talking this way made him really easy to understand. In other words, he was as strong as a Super Devil[2]. Well, that's something that I understood already. After all, he was an Evil Dragon on par with Crom Cruach. I didn't answer and nor did I have a reply as I readied my stance — and then charged towards him in a straight line! The first to strike gets the upper hand! Although I'm not like Xenovia, it's better to attack from the front myself, instead of waiting for the opponent to prepare their first move! Lately, the opponents that I've fought against have been monsters that use difficult techniques, so just the thought of waiting for them to use those is terrifying!

I fired out several Dragon Shots as I flew towards him. Apophis remained still, and showed no intention of dodging. Just when my Dragon Shot hit him — in that instant, some kind of darkness appeared in front of Apophis. My Dragon Shot and the magic energy that was emanated from the darkness eliminated each other at the same time! …Sensei had spoken about it before. Apophis was able to manipulate darkness and shadows. He was able to utilise his full strength under the shade of darkness. If he began to control the weather, then I definitely had to stay on guard against it. In other words, the darkness that appeared in front of him just now absorbed my Dragon Shot and then eliminated it.

—At that time, darkness appeared behind me, and on both my left and right sides. A black aura darted out from it! I felt danger, and immediately flew into the air to evade it, but…a part of my dragon's wing touched the darkness and was melted by it! This darkness was capable of dissolving its opponent simply upon contact! Oh, I absolutely don't want to touch it! After that, I moved to put some distance between us. I then launched a continuous bombardment of Dragon Shots from the air. Apophis conjured up darkness in front of himself, and erased all of my shots of demonic energy. Apophis then called forth a surge of darkness to surround me and fired projectiles from the darkness towards me. I immediately dodged them so that I wouldn't be hit…those bullets of darkness dissolved anything without reservation as soon as it touched them, and upon seeing that, cold sweat trickled down my entire body. It'll be too dangerous if I take even a single direct hit. Using darkness to cancel out my attacks, and using darkness to melt everything—. It was an ability that was very easy to understand. But precisely because of this, it was very difficult to deal with! Looking at things from this perspective, he was certainly much stronger than Grendel! If that rampaging Evil Dragon was struck by these attacks, it would also have been melted and would cease to exist! Damn it! I've got absolutely no clue! Reducing our distance for close-quarters combat…was also very dangerous. My fist would probably be sucked into the darkness and my entire arm would be erased! Seeing that I had stopped attacking, Apophis began to laugh.

<<Our compatibility seems to be quite poor.>>

"Well I'm sorry! Anyway, my compatibility with any technique-type opponents is rather bad!"

In response to my sarcasm, Apophis' reaction was the exact opposite.

<<No, that's not what I meant. What I wanted to say was that our compatibility is quite poor. I'm also not very good at dealing with strong opponents who attack me directly. If I take a hit from a single punch, I'll definitely suffer a lot of damage. That's why I have no choice but to use an ability like this to protect myself from exposing any openings, and then counterattack.>>

…His overly calm speech and behaviour surprised me for a moment.

“I never thought that there could exist such a calm Evil Dragon.”

That was because all of the ones that I encountered were abnormal bastards like Grendel that rampaged agressively. Although there were Evil Dragons like Crom Cruach, Apophis was also an exception.

<<I also deeply and passionately enjoy fighting. However, if I’m compared to brutal fellows like Grendel or Níðhöggr, then it makes me feel a little disappointed.>>

No matter what he said, this guy was completely abnormal. He controlled Trihexa, and travelled to various factions to cause trouble. This couldn’t be called a normal mentality. From my perspective, his unconventional way of thinking could already be regarded as the same type as Grendel. …If it was Vali, I’m not sure what he would think either. Apophis asked me

<<Current Sekiryuutei. You — are you interested in another world?>>

…Are we starting to talk about the matters of another world now? Well, I did actually communicate with one of the gods on that side once. Thinking about it right now made my head hurt again, so I didn’t really want to think about it too much….

“I’m somewhat interested in what kind of place this other world is like, but I’m not interested in making a move against Great Red.”

Truthfully speaking, I’m definitely curious about it. It’s uncharted territory, so it’s certain to cause excitement in any man. But I absolutely do not want to defeat Great Red, who is freely and leisurely drifting about in the Dimensional Gap. After all, Great Red is one of the saviours of my life. Although I’m not sure if he ever thought about it that way…. After hearing my reply, Apophis’ lips curled up slightly as he smirked.

<<I see. Well, it’s only a matter of time after all.>> While saying that, Apophis placed his hand in front of his chest. <<I apologise for my impatient nature, but please allow me to have a swift victory.>>

All of a sudden, the surrounding area became pitch-black. As I turned and looked around in every direction, I realised that the entire island had been enclosed within a barrier. Ddraig said

[…This is bad. That guy wants to decide on the victor in one go.]

…Azazel-sensei had said so before, that as soon as the weather changed, it was the first sign of danger! In order to prevent him from continuing, I fired a Dragon Shot towards him, but the technique had already been completed, and the wall of darkness which appeared before Apophis again eliminated my demonic energy.

<<For a small island of this size, it only takes a few seconds for me to turn it into my world.>>

Apophis' entire body — gradually became enveloped in darkness. As if in response to the entire island being enshrouded by darkness, the darkness hovering around Apophis' body gradually began to expand, and slowly change. It finally formed a shape, and had become some kind of large object. A solar eclipse floated in the sky above the island, which revealed only a thin halo of light. And obscuring that was an Evil Dragon who had already transformed and was now hovering in the air—. The thing which appeared in the sky to obscure the barrier was a gigantic serpentine dragon with a total length that exceeded one hundred metres. It was completely black in colour, but it also had gems on its body which released a silvery, shimmering glow. It had three eyes upon its head, with each of them also releasing a silver luminance. So this was the… [Eclipse Dragon][3], Apophis' true form! Such…an ominous aura! It was a deadly aura which differed from that of Crom Cruach's! Upon feeling this sensation, Ddraig said

[…He has also trained to the same level as us…!]

—He was actually Heavenly Dragon-class! …This was really quite troublesome. He was much stronger than Rizevim, or in other words, it would be impossible to defeat him using my current [True Queen] form. Which means—. …So I have no choice but to use Dragon Deification…. On the contrary, if I do use Dragon Deification, then I'll definitely be able to fight against the monster standing before me. But—. It may cost me my life this time, and I won't be able to touch those things again either…. Regardless, either one of those choices are so annoying! I won't be able to touch them if I die. And not being able to touch them is no different than being dead…! …Ouch ouch oww, it really hurt as my entire body was struck by pain! Even if I were to survive, perhaps my entire lifetime would end up like this…. When I became stronger by means of Dragon Deification, it could be said that all of the things

that represented me were taken away. So that was the so-called equivalent exchange huh…. Black water slowly swarmed up towards my feet. In no way was it seawater. It was clearly an abnormal type of water. This water also continued to swell, and had already submerged the entire ridge. Was this also a special technique of Apophis'…? Speaking of which, sensei mentioned that if Apophis used black water, then I definitely had to be cautious. If I touched it, then I would definitely be dissolved into it…. While I was still being hesitant, I noticed that Apophis was not attacking.

"…Why aren't you coming over to attack?"

Apophis replied to my question with

<<I know that you have an even stronger form. You're not going to use it?>> "…You're going to give me the time to transform?" <<I was allowed to create this field. So I can wait for that much.>> …He really was a strange Evil Dragon. He himself said that he wanted to settle things quickly, yet he was willing to wait for my transformation under such circumstances…. Seeing my puzzled expression, Apophis answered my doubts. <<I think that this is a duel between dragons, could it be that you…don't think that way? Although it is true that I am in a hurry, I don't want to spoil such a one on one duel like this.>>

…….

…Ah, I see. I understand now when it's put that way. This guy and Crom Cruach are the same. No matter how dangerous their thoughts and ideas may be, and no matter how dangerous the actions that they are engaged in, they still have their pride as dragons that they will never throw away. And then, I also understood something else. He was definitely not going to play along with Rizevim's plans. Compared to that bastard, Apophis had much greater ambitions. From someone else's point of view, perhaps these beliefs were too naïve, but he still adhered to these beliefs. That's why he was so strong, so unimaginably strong—. Sairaorg-san, Kiba, Gasper, Saji, Vali, His Eminence Strada, and also Crom Cruach; all of them were honest warriors who upheld their own principles. That's why I said

"…I won't use Dragon Deification. But, I will go all out!"

<<I see, then let us begin.>>

Thus began the intense battle against Apophis who had transformed

into the shape of a dragon.

[Boost Boost Boost Boost Boost Boost Boost Boost Boost Boost Boost!!!!!!]

I continued to increase the number of Dragon Shots, as I fired out a myriad of them! —However, the darkness which covered the surface of Apophis' body completely blocked all of my attacks. Ascalon extended out from my gauntlet, and I transferred a dense amount of dragon's aura into it.

[Transfer!!]

The powerful dragon's aura and the holy aura melded together as I slashed the blade down towards Apophis, but it was still repelled by the darkness, and no damage was able to be done at all. Seeing that nothing happened when the blade of Ascalon touched the darkness, I maintained the blade in that extended position and changed my arm into Solid Impact mode! With the blade of the sword in front of me, I pointed it straight towards Apophis!

[Solid Impact Booster!!!]

It was an Ascalon version of Solid Impact + [Penetrate]!

[Penetrate!!]

The thrust of Ascalon and the Impact both hit Apophis squarely…. Although I could feel the sensation from it, unexpectedly, Apophis still did not counterattack. —It was at that time that I realised that the ridge below me had already been completely swallowed by the black water! The rate at which the sea of darkness engulfed the entire island was rapidly increasing. If things went on like this, I would no longer have a foothold. —Suddenly, a change occurred in the black water below me. It rolled into a wave, and rushed towards me! The black water seemed as if it had a will of its own as it flew towards me! And it wasn't just a single wave! The whips of black water which homed in on me began to increase one by one! I continuously dodged the attacks while in mid-air, but Apophis took advantage of this opportunity and sprayed out a dark aura from his mouth! It brushed over just a small section of my armour, but the section which it came in contact with melted! A countless number of waves of black water chased after me, in addition to the attacks from Apophis himself! I swung Ascalon to counterattack, but my openings were finally caught as streams of black water rammed through my four limbs! …Arrgh it hurts! Apophis didn't let go of

this opening, and continued to expel darkness from his mouth while I did my best to avoid it—. However, what awaited me was a stream of black water which mercilessly drilled into my abdomen! —Kuh! …My abdomen was struck with a heavy blow! I lost the momentum of flight, and fell directly downwards. The only fortunate part of that was that the place that I fell onto had not yet been flooded by black water. —But the black water that had pierced my limbs and abdomen caused immense pain which resulted in a slowing of my movements. Then, the sharp sensation of the black water pulsed across my entire body!

“Gaaaaaaaaahh!”

The tremendous amount of pain caused me to cry out in lament. … If I didn’t do something about this…I was going to die! I took out the Phoenix Tears that Ravel had given me — but when I saw them, I was speechless. The Tears had also been dyed black, and had clearly lost their function. …Was Apophis’ special ability even able to spread to the Phoenix Tears…? Apophis drifted in mid-air as he gradually drew closer to me. More and more black water also swept closer to me. …Damn it…. Why are there always more of these ridiculously strong people…. [True Queen] was the form that I achieved after undergoing all sorts of hardships. But in such a short time, opponents which exceeded it had appeared. …In that case… am I unable to protect anyone…? Eventually, the crimson armour was released. I simply lay there, with both my demonic energy and stamina exhausted. Perhaps this world is one in which only Apophis can survive in… I clenched my teeth with regret. Even so, the threat of Apophis still gradually came closer—.

…At that time, I noticed something which had fallen out of my tattered uniform. It was the amulet that kaa-san gave me when I left the patient room. My trembling hand reached out towards kaa-san’s amulet. There were two folded photographs which fell out of the broken amulet. One of those photographs had unfolded—. A certain feeling immediately welled up inside my body. That photo was of me when I was two or three years old, I was wearing a haori and hakama[4], with tou-san, kaa-san and sobo-chan…as well as jii-chan[5] who was still alive back then in a family portrait. Such photos had never been taken again. There was a single line of words written on the back of the photograph. I could no longer suppress the emotions which were welling up within me.

—Issei three years old Shichi-Go-San[6]

—Thank you for being able to grow up to this point safely

…….

…Kaa-san really treasured this photo…. …The other photo also unfolded, and what was shown was a family portrait with everyone which was taken inside the Hyoudou residence. In the middle of the first month of the New Year, it was the family portrait which was taken as commemoration. Me, my parents, everyone in the Occult Research Club who lived in the Hyoudou residence, Kuroka, Le Fay and Ophis. Written on the back of the photograph was

—The family has grown again

—Every day is so much fun

…….

…I began to cry and shed tears heavily. I made up my mind. While enduring the pain, I stood up. …Yeah, we have a lot of family members, kaa-san, tou-san. I also…have a lot of fun every day.

—But, there are things that I want to protect.

Rias, Asia, Akeno-san, Koneko-chan, Ravel, Kiba, Xenovia, Irina, Gasper, Rossweisse-san, Le Fay, Kuroka, Ophis, Azazel-sensei… everyone at school, as well as many more, not just them, there are so many more people that I want to protect. There's also tou-san, kaa-san, and sobo-chan who lives in the countryside—. The children in the Underworld who have been constantly supporting me—. In order to protect everyone, I — must use everything to fight! I — calmly began to recite the forbidden chant.

"—The Crimson Red Dragon dwelling within me, awaken from your dominance"

A dazzling red glow was emitted from the gem on my right gauntlet.

[—The Crimson Heavenly Dragon I possess within me, rise up to become a King]

Ophis' voice echoed out from the gem. I have to borrow your power once again—. Fight alongside me once again, Ophis! My friend! The gem on my left gauntlet unleashed a jet-black aura. A thick, dense, and powerful jet-black aura.

“—The jet-black God of Infinity”

An incredible crimson aura enveloped my entire body.

[—The glorious God of Dreams]

The jet-black aura of infinity was then encased over it—.

“[—Watch over the forbidden existence we shall become that transcends the boundaries]”

My crimson armour was then tinged with a jet-black colour. The power of the Dragon God gradually began to flow. Then, we sang the final verse.

“[—We shall dance like radiance within the inferno]”

“[＜＜D∞D!! D∞D D∞D!! D∞D D∞D D∞D!!!! D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D!!!!!! D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D!!!!!!!!＞＞]”

All of the gems resounded with a voice which said [D∞D!!] and permeated through to the soul. A ∞ symbol emerged on all of the gems!

“[＜＜ Dragon ∞ Drive!!!!!!＞＞]”[7]

After the chant was completed, my body was wrapped in a crimson and jet-black armour.

“—This is the last Dragon Deification.”

I raised my head as I looked up at Apophis.

＜＜…Truly splendid. This aura simply cannot be compared to that of before.＞＞

Apophis said so with joy.

“Yeah, and once things have come to this, it means that it’s already over for you. —Prepare yourself.”

＜＜Those are good words! Then let us begin the battle between Heavenly Dragon and Evil Dragon!＞＞

After we each finished speaking, I instantly charged out, and directly threw a punch at Apophis’ enormous face!

“[＜＜D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D!!!!!!!!＞＞]”

The fist which was carrying the power of infinity — this direct attack knocked Apophis backwards substantially. Apophis was unable to nullify my punch.

＜＜Even my darkness cannot cancel out this power! How interesting!＞＞

Without the slightest hesitation, Apophis spewed out darkness from his mouth! I used an infinite Dragon Shot to counterattack — my Dragon Shot was pushed back, and I was hit by Apophis’ darkness! —A portion of the infinite armour was melted! What happened!? I was able to easily beat down Rizevim in this state, but I’m still getting hit by Apophis’ attacks!

[I told you so before. He is already Heavenly Dragon-class.]

I see now, Ddraig! In other words, I definitely can’t be careless! Apophis and I continued our direct confrontation with each other on the uninhabited island that was covered by a black barrier. I used punches and kicks, while Apophis manipulated the black water like a whip to counter my attacks. The impact spread not only to the internal area of my armour, but even my flesh accumulated damage. My four dragon wings were also pierced by black water several times, causing them to disappear, and while being forced to repair them, I had to be careful so that I didn’t fall into the black water below me. I attacked both physically and with Dragon Shots, while Apophis used his breath of darkness, barriers, and the manipulation of the black water to fight back. No wonder I was unable to defeat him using the crimson armour. This guy…is really strong! Even this infinite armour was being pressured! Nonetheless, my attacks were also equally effective against him! It was actually causing him damage! I managed to pull away from him, and spread open my four dragon wings which had cannons mounted on them! Barrels extended out of the two on top of my shoulders and the two below my arms! Ryuuuuu…. They quietly began to hum, as the power of infinity gathered at each of the muzzles!

＜＜How interesting! Let’s finish this now, Sekiryuutei!＞＞

Apophis unleashed an extraordinarily large ball of darkness from his mouth! Even I would suffer immense damage if I was hit by that in my current state! A voice resounded from all of my gems.

“[＜＜D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D D∞D !!!!!!!!＞＞]”

An [∞] symbol appeared on all of the gems of my armour, as the colours of red and black flashed alternatingly.

“Gooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!”

“[＜＜ ∞ Blaster!!!!!! ＞＞]”[8]

An incredibly vast amount of aura was blasted from the muzzles of the four cannons; red and black aura interwove as it went straight towards Apophis!

—What!

I was completely shocked by the sight before my eyes! —Apophis opened his mouth once more, and continuously spat out three enormous masses of darkness! There were a total of four balls of darkness! The four enormous masses of darkness collided with my Infinity Blaster! …They didn’t fully disappear! This can’t be real! He truly was unimaginably strong, Apophis! No, in this case, I couldn’t hold back either! I had to continue fighting! I concentrated on my abdomen. The armour over my chest and abdomen began to change. It rattled as they separated, and the muzzle of a cannon emerged from my there! The power of infinity began to gather at the muzzle of the cannon on my chest. Then—.

“This is the end, Apophis!”

“[＜＜Longinus Smasher!!!!!!!!!!!!＞＞]”

In addition to the Blaster from four of my cannons was the forbidden attack — Longinus Smasher was also fired out. An immense red aura combined with my Infinity Blaster from earlier, extensively destroying Apophis’ masses of darkness, and ultimately engulfing the Evil Dragon’s entire body into it—.

After a continuous use of those abilities, I felt greatly fatigued, and descended to the ground where I knelt down and breathed in and out heavily. Although the black barrier had not yet lifted, the black water was gradually receding, and the small island was beginning to return to its original appearance. An enormous black Evil Dragon was lying in front of me. He had suffered severe injuries all over his

body, and he was in a state where he was already beyond any kind of healing. Apophis smiled as he said to me

<<…That was a splendid fight, Sekiryuutei…no, Hyoudou Issei. I was able to…fight with a hero like you, I feel deeply happy…ah, this is something that an Evil Dragon should be.>>

Seeing Apohis, who seemed deeply satisfied, I put forward my own questions.

“You’re clearly a dragon who would fight an honest duel with me, so why did you do something like this…”

<<Aži Dahāka and I are both Evil Dragons. The end of an Evil Dragon should arise from a direct confrontation with a hero, followed by their defeat. Only with this does an Evil Dragon’s existence become complete. …That’s why this is fine. A fight like Rizevim’s without any glory is the lowest of the lowest…>>

…Yeah, your one on one duel with me has given me insight into a dragon’s pride, and shown me what a true Evil Dragon is. Precisely because of this, as an enemy that I must defeat, you and I fought. In his final moments, Apophis left his last words just as he disappeared

<<…Hyoudou Issei, come back and fight me one day…>>

Apophis’ body completely turned into dust, and disappeared into the wind—. Accepting the Evil Dragon’s invitation was fine, but I noticed that the black barrier didn’t seem to have any signs of undoing itself…. At that time, Ddraig brought up a disturbing topic.

[…I see, there is another one who needs to come here.]

—What! W-What are you talking about…? I didn’t even have the time to ask, as the space in front of me made a ripping noise and distorted. What emerged from there was — a humanoid being that emitted a white brilliance. A luminous…human being? Of course, that was impossible…. Because an extremely ominous aura was floating around it…! There were ten horns upon its head. That was the only distinguishing characteristic that it had…. No, I was familiar with this aura.

“That is—”

Before I could answer, Ddraig replied

[…It is the consciousness of Trihexa. It is formed by an aggregate of its consciousness. However, I didn't think that it would have the appearance of a boy.]

—What!

Simply from its presence and atmosphere, I could feel that this being was indeed Trihexa! It was actually an aggregate of its consciousness!? Hey hey hey! Why did it appear right here!? Shouldn't its movements have been stopped!? Just as I became wary of it, a change occurred in the barrier once again. —A teleportation magic circle with the crest of Lucifer appeared beside me. The one who emerged from it was a red-haired man — it was actually Sirzechs-sama!?

"Yo, Ise-kun"

Sirzechs-sama still greeted me as usual with a calm demeanour.

"Sirzechs-sama!? W-Why did you come here…?"

Seeing my immense surprise, Sirzechs-sama smiled as he replied

"Indeed. Putting it simply — I came here to fight together with you."

"N-No, I don't understand what you mean!"

Upon seeing that I was still doubtful, Sirzechs-sama answered me again

"Many of my chores have already been completed, so I came here to act as reinforcements for the allied forces in Japan. I then learned that you and Apophis were fighting against each other within this black barrier. It is most likely impenetrable for those without sufficient strength."

Apophis truly was powerful. Unless someone possessed sufficient strength, they would not be able to break through this barrier. Sirzechs-sama took off his cloak as he said

"A change has occurred to the Trihexa which was originally supposed to have been stopped. It ejected a core from its mouth. It then released a sudden flash of light, and vanished. While I was thinking of where it disappeared to…a reaction occurred within this barrier. Hence, I came into this barrier by myself."

S-So something like that happened. Trihexa's movements were stopped by Rossweisse-san and the others' technique, but Trihexa spat out its core. It then transported itself, and finally wound up in here—. The core was clearly giving off an air of hostility towards me.

"…Why would it come here?"

I couldn't help voicing the question that was on my mind. It was obviously able to go on a rampage while on the outside, but it deliberately came to where I was…. Sirzechs-sama laughed.

"I'm sure it must be because you have more charm. …I think it probably reacted to Ophis and Great Red, which is why it came here."

—What! I-I see now. Because I possess the power of both Ophis and Great Red, that's why Trihexa reacted in that way…. It makes sense now. Just earlier, I fired off blasts from my cannons which embodied the power of those two. With such a powerful aura, it must have attracted its attention. Sirzechs-sama looked around at the whole island. To be more accurate, he was examining the barrier.

"…Hmm, it looks like if even Ise-kun's power was unable to break this, Trihexa must have noticed Apophis from the outside, and may have even strengthened the barrier. It seems like it really wanted to be alone with you."

P-Please don't say such outrageous things! Why do monsters always seem to like me!? …When he put it like that though, I finally understood. The barrier was not destroyed by me, and that was a result of Trihexa's strengthening of it. Sirzechs-sama then continued

"Speaking of which, we successfully gained control of the Holy Grail. Therefore, the Evil Dragons and fake Sekiryuutei across the various territories have now been eliminated."

—Ah!

Oh, that's really good news! Gya-suke and Valerie were able to successfully stop the Holy Grail! In that case, the Holy Grail could now be safely returned to Valerie. While I felt relieved by that, Sirzechs-sama, who was beside me, began to increase his aura. —He planned to fight against the core of Trihexa that was before us.

“Despite having said that, if something isn’t done against the thing in front of us, Ise-kun won’t be able to leave this barrier. Moreover, looking at your current state, your Dragon Deification form looks like it will be released soon.”

Sirzechs-sama laughed lightly as he continued

“As your brother-in-law, I really want to have the opportunity to fight together with you. But anyway, this is also my last act of selfishness.”

Your words, what do you—. I didn’t understand the true meaning behind Sirzechs-sama’s words, but the Maou-sama continued to elevate his aura which embodied the power of destruction. The entire island was trembling—. His aura soared up again, and the demonic energy of destruction enveloped Sirzechs-sama’s entire body! What appeared in his place was a dense concentration of the aura of destruction which had converged into a humanoid form, an absolute existence. I-Is this Sirzechs-sama’s true form? Just by feeling the atmosphere he exuded from beside him, it made me understand that this was an immense aura beyond all imagination…. This is a Super Devil. The current Maou Lucifer! Even Ddraig leaked a breath of admiration at the sight of this.

[…This is Rias Gremory’s ani. An irregular among the Devils. …A true monster.]

Having become the incarnation of destruction, Sirzechs-sama laughed.

[Fufufu, I think that your transformation is also very irregular right, Ddraig? —So how about the crimson Maou and crimson[9] Dragon Emperor stop this monster together?]

—What! …I haven’t had an invitation that could be any more exciting than this!

“Yeah!”

I answered as I turned to face the humanoid being of light in front of us — Trihexa readied its stance! In an instant, all three people silently vanished from their positions! A mid-air battle then began! Trihexa’s core gave birth to six wings from its back. They were the wings of a bird, dragon, bat, and various other beasts. I charged directly in from the front while flying in mid-air, and sent the core flying backwards. The core fluttered in the air like a bird to correct

its stance, and then flew towards me at high speed once again. I wanted to kick it as a counteroffensive, but the core's figure disappeared from my vision in an instant, and it slid right behind me. Sirzechs-sama then launched an orb of destruction at it, which instantly destroyed the core's entire body! It's over now — just when I thought that, I didn't expect that the miniscule piece of flesh which remained of it would regenerate with a violent momentum, restoring it back to its original form. …If it's like this, it won't work unless we completely eliminate it…! Sirzechs-sama and I coordinated with each other, as we alternated melee attacks and the demonic energy of destruction; the core was defeated several times, but it always restored itself to its original form instantaneously. The core gradually adapted and responded to each of our attacks by using its aura to repel my flying kicks and Sirzechs-sama as the incarnation of destruction. …Well, Sirzechs-sama and I were also unharmed…. However, our opponent was also completely unscathed. While Sirzechs-sama released a burst of destructive energy which was enough to cause more than half of the island to disappear, he said to me

[Oh yes, why don't you call me 'gikei-san'[10] while we're fighting?]

"A-At a time like this, what are you saying…!"

He still had a lot of headroom left while fighting, since Sirzechs-sama was still making jokes!

[Fufufu, well, I guess you're right.]

It felt like Sirzechs-sama really enjoyed being able to fight side by side with me. However, he had no hesitation against Trihexa's core as his opponent, and he continuously hurled his orbs of destruction at Trihexa! Regardless of how strong an enemy was, if they took a hit from such dense aura imbued with the power of destruction, they would definitely be annihilated, but the current enemy was the legendary Imperial Beast. It regenerated with unthinkable speed, and it began to attack us again, as if it had never been damaged in the first place! The demonic energy of destruction that Sirzechs-sama released was roughly about the size of a basketball. However, each and every one of his attacks contained an incredibly condensed amount of energy. It was probably equivalent to Rias' [Extinguish Star][11], or even superior to it. Sirzechs-sama was also able to manipulate these freely, and he continuously pursued the core with them. Nevertheless, this form was also problematic. Because the power of destruction was being released from his entire

body, every single step he took caused everything around him to be destroyed, and even the ground was carved away. That's why, under these circumstances, Sirzechs-sama was basically hovering in the air all the time.

The core attempted to clash with Sirzechs-sama in a frontal assault and engage in melee combat. Despite the fact that the core's hands and feet were erased as soon as they touched Sirzechs-sama, it still continued to attack. Sirzechs-sama himself was good at melee combat, so he was able to respond in turn. Damn it! I originally wanted to seize any chance that there was to give that core a taste of one of my large blasts…but after that intense fight against Apophis, my head was still somewhat dizzy, and my entire body was aching with incredible pain all over! As long as I was in my [Diabolos Dragon][12] form, I had the power of infinity…but if I really let loose another blast, would that lead to my death? I gave up on using a cannon attack, and instead used my fists to help out Sirzechs-sama. —All of a sudden, Ddraig began to laugh amusedly.

"Hmm? What is it, Ddraig?"

[…That Albion. It looks like he's finally blown away the confusion for the first time in these past two thousand years.]

…Blew away the confusion? What is that in the first place? Ddraig still continued to laugh, and then he said to me

[Kukuku…then I will also use what has been sealed.]

The thing that Ddraig was thinking of soon appeared in my mind. ……Waa! T-This is! The thing that Ddraig described completely shocked me! Ddraig said

[That is correct, the thing that has now appeared in your mind was my original finishing move. The only attack to be crowned with such a name — partner! Hurry and use it! Use the Welsh Dragon's[13], Sekiryuutei Y Ddraig Goch's ultimate finishing move!]

In order to respond to Ddraig, I focused on pooling all of my aura towards my abdomen! I need it to be exactly like Tannin-ossan's! Becoming aware of my actions, Sirzechs-sama pulled back.

—Right now!

I blew out everything that had accumulated in my abdomen in one breath! The entire island was enveloped in an endless, searing,

inferno, with Trihexa's core being bathed within it! The core was going to be burnt until not a trace remained of it!

"…I-It's truly formidable, even Trihexa can be burnt by it!"

Ddraig said

[—[Blazing Inferno of Scorching Flames]. The ultimate flames which can incinerate anything. Once ignited, they will never go out. Even gods will be burnt to ashes within these flames. And the only one that it is ineffective against is Albion. …Well, if it was Great Red, or the Infinite Ophis, it might also be ineffective.]

I-Indeed, the flames which were burning through the core did not show any signs of weakening! Although it was able to regenerate after being burnt to ashes, the flames showed no signs of disappearing! To think that such ferocious flames actually existed! Wouldn't it have been better if you told me this a bit earlier!

[That would have been impossible. Up until now — it was sealed within the Sacred Gear by the God of the Bible. Being able to release the seal here is also thanks to effects of this second Dragon Deification. Of course, I also noticed the change in Albion's determination.]

I-I see! After all, it was a power worthy of being sealed by the God of the Bible. It really was difficult to imagine…. However, even though the core in front of us was being burnt by Ddraig's flames, its fighting spirit did not cease. Hey, come on! The flames did not disappear, and it continued to burn…but it still looked as if nothing had happened to it!? Ddraig said

[Only a monster with incredibly strong endurance and regenerative abilities would be able to stand up like that. Since it didn't instantaneously disintegrate the moment that it was touched by my flames, it could be described as a troublesome existence that is beyond even god-class beings.]

What an unbelievable monster! Sirzechs-sama once again hurled a countless number of orbs of destruction towards the core. The core didn't put up any resistance, and was eliminated along with a part of the island…. What was frightening was that the remains of Trihexa consisted of only specks of dust, and yet it still regenerated in an instant. …If things really went on like this, I would be out of ideas…. Its regenerative abilities didn't seem to be weakening at all. And I…didn't know how much longer I would be able to maintain

this form for. …M-More precisely, I already—. In that instant, my consciousness blurred. My armour was released, and I fell down on both knees to the ground. …I then collapsed onto the ground, and could not get back up again. …The blood that had accumulated in my abdomen gushed up and I forcefully spat it out. An intense pain attacked my entire body…! Aaaaaaaaaaaahhhhh it hurts…! No good…I don't even have the strength left to move my fingers…nor move my feet….

[Ise-kun, stay there.]

Sirzechs-sama flew to my side…I really can't move at all. I could only say 'Sorry…' as a useless word of apology…. All of a sudden, the barrier around the island was lifted. The sky returned to its original colour. I was also able to see the surroundings outside of the island.

[…The barrier has been released huh. But, if this continues…]

Upon considering the current situation, it seemed as if Sirzechs-sama had already solidified his decision about something.

[—As I thought, that plan is necessary.]

After saying that, Sirzechs-sama created a magic circle which was similar to that of Rossweisse-san's, and projected it towards the core. The core was restrained by a powerful binding technique, and its movements were completely sealed. Sirzechs-sama then created a small magic circle with his hand, and then projected it onto the ground. The magic circle with the crest of Lucifer then expanded on the ground, creating a powerful wave of energy. The aura from it swelled, and what appeared there at last — was Sirzechs-sama's peerage.

"""""""""All members of Lucifer's peerage have assembled."""""""""

Grayfia-san was also present. Everyone knelt down before Sirzechs-sama. Sirzechs-sama turned towards his peerage, and asked a question

[How are the places outside of the barrier doing?]

Sirzechs-sama's [Bishop] MacGregor Mathers-san reported

"There are signs that the Trihexa outside is beginning to move again."

His [Knight] Okita Souji-san then added

“Cores have also appeared in the other territories, and they are currently on the loose. Because of their extraordinary regenerative ability, they have not been able to be stopped effectively. To make matters worse, the techniques which have been applied to the original body are being undone.”

…In other words, among the Trihexas which have appeared in the territories of the various factions, their cores have escaped, and that has allowed the original body to be able to move again…. …Even if the Holy Grail has been stopped, and Apophis has been defeated, if this incarnation of destruction is not defeated, then things are still helpless…. …If something isn’t done against its regenerative abilities, this world really…will be…. A small communications magic circle appeared beside Sirzechs-sama’s ear so that he could listen to information from a range of sources. He then said to his peerage

[We need to implement the plan. Is this okay?]

Everyone nodded. Grayfia-san and everyone else all understood Sirzechs-sama’s thoughts, and agreed. Suddenly, Sirzechs-sama called out to Grayfia-san.

[—Grayfia]

Sirzechs-sama faced Grayfia-san, who lifted her head, and then created a magic circle which released some kind of technique towards her.

“—Huh!? Sirzechs-sama, what are you trying to do!?”

As both her master, and her husband, Sirzechs-sama’s sudden behaviour caused Grayfia-san to be at a loss. —Grayfia-san instantly fell to the ground. As if her power had been siphoned away, she then collapsed onto the ground. Sirzechs-sama said

[This is the special hypnosis technique that Azazel taught me. I thought that it would be useful on you.]

“…W-Why would you do such a thing…!”

Grayfia-san crept closer to Sirzechs-sama. The hypnosis technique had already taken effect, and her eyelids slowly drooped. Sirzechs-sama was currently the incarnation of destruction. He originally

wanted to hug Grayfia-san, but when he noticed his own form, he retracted the hand that he had extended. His bodily expression… looked awfully pained. Facing his [Queen] and wife who was gradually falling asleep, Sirzechs-sama said

[I'm sorry, Grayfia. I hope that you can remain here.]

"…You…really are…too cunning, Sirzechs…! …We clearly swore… that we would be together forever…!"

Grayfia-san's consciousness gradually faded, and she cried as she faced her husband, the person that she loved. Sirzechs-sama also spoke with a tone of sadness

[For Millicas, in the days ahead of him…a haha is necessary.]

"…That child…actually, towards you…Sir…zechs……"

Grayfia-san only left behind those unfinished words, and then fell into a deep slumber on the spot. The corners of her eyes — were moist with tears. Okita Souji-san then lifted up Grayfia-san and placed her down by my side. Sirzechs-sama seemed ashamed towards his own peerage as he apologised.

[…I'm sorry, my peerage members. I've shown you something unseemly.]

His peerage members shook their heads, and all of them had pained and sorrowful expressions.

"That isn't so, something like that is fine, really."

Okita Souji-san replied. His [Rook] Surtr Second-san smiled forthrightly.

"Well, if you didn't do that, nee-sama would have insisted on following us over."

I then finally understood. —Sirzechs-sama and the others planned to go to somewhere. It was also a place that was closely related to Trihexa…. Sirzechs-sama said to his peerage

[I'm sorry everyone, but can you accompany me until the last moment?]

"""""""Yes, our lives are yours to command Sirzechs-sama—"""""""

His peerage members responded in a uniform manner. In that moment — I noticed a change in the surroundings. A large dimensional distortion occurred above us, and it continued to grow, until it became a large hole. Sirzechs-sama's peerage gathered around the core which had been sealed, and activated a particular technique. I understood what the large hole which had appeared in the sky above was attracting. —It was Trihexa's original body. Trihexa's original body was covered in a magic formation which glowed with a holy radiance. Then, at some place near Trihexa, I also felt Serafall Leviathan-sama's aura. I wondered if she was also going to fight. Sirzechs-sama expanded a magic circle in front of himself, and a display was projected out of it. On the display were Leviathan-sama and Falbium Asmodeus-sama.

<<Sirzechs-chan, all the preparations are already complete here.>>

<<We're ready to transfer at any time.>>

[I understand, Serafall, Falbium. —Have you finished saying your farewells to those you love?]

Upon hearing Sirzechs-sama's question, Leviathan-sama showed a saddened expression.

<<…I've been troubled about it until the end. That child will certainly cry, and I don't want to see that child's crying face. Otherwise, I would definitely hesitate…>>

On the other hand, Falbium Asmodeus replied rather cynically

<<I never had someone like that on my side to begin with. Anyway, I've also left most of the things that come afterwards in the care of my [Queen] here.>> [I see. I've also done as you have, Serafall, Falbium, and have left my [Queen] here for the future. So Grayfia will remain here.] <<I see, you're leaving Grayfia-chan behind. I think that's for the better.>> <<It's because each of the Maou's [Queens] are treasures of the Underworld.>>

Sirzechs-sama and the other two Maou-sama engaged in conversation.

"……Sirzechs-sama…? …What is happening…?"

My body was unable to move, but I still asked Sirzechs-sama.

[This is it. This is the final means of those of us in the top brass. According to our calculations, defeating Trihexa will require an enormous amount of time. Of course, being able to completely seal it would be best, but…but it is unfortunate that that will also take a lot of time and is not the conclusion that we need.]

Sirzechs-sama's peerage applied techniques to the core, and flew towards the hole in the sky together—. Sirzechs-sama continued

[Regardless of whether we defeat it or seal it, either method is extremely time-consuming. And Trihexa will continue its destruction in the meantime. If that continues, the world will be completely destroyed. Our combat strength is also limited. Once, or twice, we may be able to hold it back, but there will come a day — when our strength is exhausted. Just like before, you saw what kind of a monster the opponent is, Ise-kun. It is a true monster that will completely regenerate no matter how you try to defeat it.]

Sirzechs-sama began to move away from where I was. While flying upwards, he continued to say

[Serafall, Falbium and I, as well as my peerage will depart from here to the 'Isolation Barrier Field' that was created by Azazel and the others specifically for use against Trihexa. We will also seal the original body and the core within that field. And be confined together with it. The higher ups of the other factions have also agreed to this plan. Azazel, Michael-dono, Odin-sama, Zeus-sama, and other gods will also implement this plan in their respective territories at the same time.]

……What! …Their unbelievable plan left my head in a daze. …The large operation that sensei spoke of earlier was actually to seal the higher ups of each faction together with Trihexa in an isolated field…! Sirzechs-sama said

[Until we defeat Trihexa, we will continue to fight in there. I don't know how many years it will take, but while we are fighting in there, peace will come to the various factions of the world. This is… necessary. This is something even more important for those of us who are in the top brass. —Like this, I can finally fulfil my duty as a Maou.]

Sirzechs-sama looked into the distance.

[Just now, I've received some new information. The true successor of Lucifer has appeared, and it makes me feel a bit happier. Vali

Lucifer, he is the true heir and successor of Lucifer. To Devils, Lucifer is a necessary existence. The Hakuryuukou Vali, he is different from Rizevim.]

Sirzechs-sama gradually moved further and further away from me and Grayfia-san.

[But, from now on, other Maous will be needed. Ise-kun. —I don't think there will be any problems if you become a Maou.]

—Mmn. I wanted to say something, but I no longer had the strength to even speak, and my consciousness gradually receded. Even so, Sirzechs-sama still conveyed his words, his emotions, and his will to me.

[If it's you, then you'll definitely be able to become a great Maou. Although there are currently a lot of deficiencies…but in the near future, surely, Ise-kun, you — will become the hope of every faction.]

Sirzechs-sama's voice gradually became more distant.

[Rias, Millicas, and — Grayfia. I leave them in your care for some time. Don't judge Grayfia by her appearances, she'll actually be very lonely, even more so than Rias. …When I'm not around, I hope that you can be her conversation partner.]

…You're too cunning, Sirzechs-sama…. …I still have so many things to tell you, and also many things that I would like you to tell me, and also many, many things that I want to do together with you…. Sirzechs-sama's final words reached my ears

[—Ise-kun, the Underworld shall be left in the care of Rias, Sona, Sairaorg, and the others. Next is Millicas' generation, and the generations which follow, so please look after them on my behalf. Well, goodb—]

At this point, I lost consciousness.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ Ani – older brother. Otouto – younger brother. Kanji was

Deep Red and True Red. However, deep red and true red are often both called crimson.

2. ↑ Transcendent Being and Super Devil are equivalent terms.
3. ↑ Kanji was Primordial Darkness Dragon.
4. ↑ Traditional Japanese clothing that is usually worn on special occasions such as coming-of-age ceremonies. The haori is like a coat, while the hakama are like trousers which reach down to the ankles.
5. ↑ tou-san: father. kaa-san: mother. sobo-chan: own grandmother. jii-chan: grandfather.
6. ↑ Shichi-Go-San (literally seven five three) is a traditional coming-of-age ceremony for girls who are three and seven, and boys who are three and five years of age to celebrate their growth and well-being.
7. ↑ Read as: Dragon Infinity Drive.
8. ↑ Read as: Infinity Blaster.
9. ↑ The literal translation of crimson is deep red for Sirzechs, whereas the literal translation of crimson is true red for Issei.
10. ↑ gikei-san: brother-in-law.
11. ↑ Kanji was Demonic Star of Extinction.
12. ↑ Written as: DxD.
13. ↑ Kanji was Red Dragon.

Eternal Life. Amidst the White Snow

The ones fighting against the Trihexa in Europe consisted of the Vali Team, Slash Dog Team, and a legion of Fallen Angels from the Grigori. Following the sudden appearance of the humanoid Trihexa — and after a fierce battle with the [core], it suddenly ceased its movements. Not long before that, “Now is a suitable time” — Azazel had said that. The [core] of Trihexa which was then caught inside a magic circle which had been deployed, and it was stopped. While Vali was puzzled by the scene before his eyes, Azazel quietly activated the magic circle that he had created with his hand. Then, the Trihexa that stood in front of him was surrounded by ten magic circles which glowed with a holy radiance. The light radiated from each of the magic circles connected with each other, forming a shape just like the Tree of Sephiroth[1]. Vali then realised that this was the plan that Azazel had mentioned earlier. An eleventh magic circle then appeared over Trihexa’s head, and the formation became complete. Looking towards that place, god-class beings had imperceptibly appeared all around Trihexa at some point unbeknownst to him, and were now controlling the Tree of Sephiroth. And thanks to them, both Trihexa and the [core] completely stopped moving. Among them were Archangel Michael, along with the Seraphim Raphael and Uriel who were serving as the core members. Their [Brave Saints] also accompanied them by their sides. Michael opened up his twelve wings as he said to Azazel

“Azazel, the preparations here are already complete.”

“Ah, I understand. Are you sure that your side is okay?”

“Yes. The members who will be going have all been unanimously agreed upon. Me, Raphael, Uriel, and our respective [Brave Saints]. Gabriel and the other members of the Seraphim will stay here. In addition, Joker Dulio and the Aces of the Four Great Seraphs will also stay behind.”

“Well, leaving behind those members is also a good decision. On my side…it’s only just me. I’m sorry. There’s a complete lack of human resources on my side.”

“The War and the subsequent disputes afterwards must have made the Grigori considerably exhausted.”

“Well, only because they fought in battle with their lives at stake, does the present exist. Since that is the case, it’s my turn to head out now.”

Azazel directed his eyes towards Trihexa. His eyes were filled with the shine of determination, but a glint of hesitation was also mixed into it.

“…Azazel?”

In response to Vali’s question, Azazel replied

“Hey, Vali. I…after all, I was unable to have a bratty child of my own. But you know, if I had to say that I had a child — presumably, it would be you. And precisely because of this, I was given quite a shock when you joined [Khaos Brigade].”

Azazel’s rather abrupt and forthright words caused Vali to feel a sense of anxiety. Moreover, the sudden unease that he felt from Azazel just then had the possibility of coming to fruition.

“…What are you saying? It’s too strange for you to be saying something like that at a time like this. You’re not the type of man who would say things of that kind at a time like this.”

“No, I’m saying this precisely because it is that kind of time. Heh, well never mind.”

Azazel spread his wings, and then slowly ascended into the sky. A huge crack in space occurred above its head. The crack gradually expanded, and then became like a hole. Its size was sufficient to absorb Trihexa’s entire body. On the other side of the hole was an endless darkness. It seemed quite similar to the Dimensional Gap. Azazel said

“The other side is a specialised sealing field. It’s called the [Isolation Barrier Field]. It incorporates the technology of the Rating Games, the secret techniques of the [Game] that Ajuka Beelzebub designed, Heaven’s Sacred Gear system, the System of God which is responsible for miracles, Rossweisse’s research on barrier techniques, the principles of the Nordic Yggdrasil[2], as well as the research results that the Grigori has accumulated over the years; all of it has been integrated together to produce a single world. Put in simple terms, it is the product of all of our research to design a cage exclusively for Trihexa. However, Rossweisse has no idea about what we’re going to do with it. If she found out about it,

she would definitely be in opposition."

—What.

A dedicated cage. It was also something that even Rossweisse, who assisted with research on Trihexa did not know about. Since they were actually able to produce an object like that, Vali was speechless in response to Azazel, because he always seemed to be adequately prepared. However, Azazel's conversation with Michael just then was still inciting restlessness within Vali's heart. Azazel continued

"But there is still one problem. The [Isolation Barrier Field] can certainly be said to be very strong against Trihexa, but it is not absolute. If it is simply sent in there, it will be able to break free from it one day. That's just the exceptional monster that it is. Therefore, there must be people inside to contain Trihexa."

Azazel suddenly expanded a magic circle, and halted the movements of Vali and the others. During the battle against Trihexa, its [core], the mass-produced Evil Dragons and the fake Sekiryuutei, all of the members on the ground had consumed too much of their strength, so they were unable to resist Azazel's restraining technique. With a subtle expression on his face, Azazel continued

"This is a restraining technique that is particularly effective against Sacred Gear possessors. I'm sorry to all of you."

While all of the members had become paralysed, Azazel continued his job of transporting Trihexa. Trihexa's enormous body was slowly, yet gradually shifted into the hole that had appeared in the sky above them. At the same time, Azazel and all of the other god-class people in the surrounding area flew towards the centre of the hole. While looking down at Vali below him, Azazel said

"—The leaders of each faction will go there to contain Trihexa. In there, we will continue to fight until it is defeated. Of course, I, Michael and those from his side, as well as Sirzechs' side all intend to bear this responsibility. The same thing is also happening in the other places which have been attacked."

"W-Wait! Azazel!"

Despite Vali's desperate cries, Azazel still continued

“In fact, we leaders had already made such a decision between ourselves a long time ago. The good news is that, no matter what happened, they all readily accepted my proposal. Odin and Zeus as well, they also agreed. After all, for the guys who are worshipped by humans, they also deeply love humanity. …No, it would be better to say that they understand that without humanity, their own mythologies cannot survive.”

Michael said

“Well, we’ve always allowed our own believers and the young Devils to do all kinds of hard work. A monster like this which can be described as a legend among legends ought to be up to us to deal with. Naturally, we can also reduce the potential damage this way.”

No. That’s not what I want to hear. In the end, why, why is it you —.

Azazel looked at Vali, who had a bewildered expression across his face, and said while smiling

“That’s why I’m saying, Vali. This is just a temporary farewell. Here, I may be a Fallen Angel, but you are the successor of the Maou. We are all people with long lives, so there will come a day when we meet again. I’m quite sorry about not being able to let you and your stepfather Odin say farewell…but if it was that old man, he’d definitely leave behind a lot of words.”

Not this. Not only this! What I want to be told, and want to hear, is certainly none of this!

Not only was he unable to move, but he was also unable to undo the restraining technique that was cast on him earlier. He clearly understood that right now, while his stamina and demonic energy were depleted, it was impossible to undo the technique. Azazel must have expected that this would happen long in advance, which is why he prepared for it. Azazel ignored Vali’s struggles and continued

“Give my regards to Ise and the others for me as well. I’m also leaving them a message. Under these circumstances, I’m unable to say goodbye directly—”

“It’s obviously possible that you don’t need to go!”

Vali interrupted Azazel’s speech, and shouted out loudly. …Why

was it, if it was in the past, he definitely wouldn't have been able to say something like that…meeting Hyoudou Issei and the others, and after seeing his own haha, Vali felt that a strange emotion was generated within himself. Azazel was currently with Michael and the others as they disappeared into the hole in the sky above along with Trihexa.

It was also like this at that time—.

Snow wafted downwards. Pure white snowflakes quietly floated down from the sky. Vali recalled the scene of that time within his mind. The memory of his first encounter with Azazel. Snowflakes were also falling at that time. Azazel gently said to Vali

"I, we, must do this. Various conflicts have been triggered over the past year, and it was us in the top brass who coerced you, the younger generation to resolve those issues. So at the very end, why not let us do something so that we can uphold our honour."

In that moment, what he recalled were the memories of the times that he had spent together with Azazel.

For the first time, he taught me how to read and write accurately.

For the first time, he taught me how to use my power as a Devil.

For the first time, I was able to have a conversation with Albion.

For the first time, we went fishing together.

For the first time, he took me for a drive.

For the first time—.

He taught me so many things, and did so many things for me, but in the end, I went off on my own.

Vali could no longer supress the complex emotions within his heart. As Azazel gradually began to disappear into the barrier field that he would seal himself in, he said

"You'll definitely be alright, Vali. You and your nakama. Even if I'm not around, there are still a lot of other things, right? Although you're a battle maniac, haven't you turned into a brat befitting your own age over the past year? Bikou, Kuroka, Arthur, and Le Fay, I'll leave that guy in your care. Don't judge him by his appearances,

he's actually quite lonely."

"…Ah, I already knew stuff like that."

"…Governor…this way of parting is too mean nya…"

"Leave the concerns of Vali to me."

"…Uhh."

He then faced Ikuse Tobio and the others as he said

"Tobio, Lavinia. Thank you also for your team's work. Lavinia, please convey that to Mephisto for me."

"……"

"…I don't like such things."

Ikuse Tobio bowed his head in silence. He…had always been in the care of Azazel. He probably had a thousand things that he wanted to say. Finally, Azazel faced Vali as he spoke his last words

"Vali! In your duel against Ise, in the showdown between the Two Heavenly Dragons, a clear victor must be decided between the rivals, okay? You and Ise are my last and also my best students!"

"Wait—"

"See you later."

The holy radiance before their eyes instantly flashed brighter. Trihexa's enormous body then disappeared into the hole entirely. At the same time, the god-class people, Azazel, Michael, and the others who were controlling the technique also disappeared—. Left behind were Vali and the others, as well as the white snow that quietly drifted downwards—.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ Kanji was Tree of Life. This is a symbolic representation of a tree with ten or eleven parts, which each represent a different spiritual concept.

2. ↑ Kanji was World Tree.

Farewell Temporary

Japan — on the coast of the Pacific Ocean, the [DxD] Team and their allies who fought against the Trihexa which threatened Japan now bore witness to the scene before their eyes. Trihexa was gradually being dragged into the sealing field—. After a retreat was issued to return to this coast, all members received news of the final battle plan. The higher ups of each faction prepared themselves for an eternal battle with Trihexa, and then set out for the Isolation Barrier Field—. Once inside, unless they defeated Trihexa, regardless of whether they were a god-class being or a Transcendent Being, they would not be able to come out. In order to defeat Trihexa, which was capable of repeatedly regenerating itself, it would require several thousand years, or even—.

Sona Sitri was standing on the coast in one corner while crying. She did not know that her ane[1], Serafall, would also depart for there. Not even a single word of farewell was conveyed to her.

"…Onee-sama…no, I hate this…. Why did you leave me behind and go ahead by yourself…? My dream…I also wanted you to see it, onee-sama…"

The sorrowful Sona Sitri wept without any of the visage that she normally had, but instead showed tears befitting a girl of her age. It was only natural. She was eighteen years old. As a Devil, she was still a child, and from now on, she would be waiting for an eternity without her ane, and a world without her ane.

At the same time, standing beside her to comfort her, Rias Gremory was in the same situation. Her ani[2] Sirzechs had also departed for the Isolation Barrier Field—. No parting words could be conveyed either. Her ani was Lucifer. The King of Devils, Lucifer. So, in order to protect the Devils, he made up his mind to participate in the eternal battle against Trihexa. However—. Her ani…he was also a Gremory. He was originally a Gremory. Even if he was called a Super Devil, he was originally a Gremory. It's just that he was a gentle and strong person.

Yes, he was gentle and strong—.

No, precisely because of this, Sirzechs had such determination. Precisely because of his gentleness and his strength, he departed for

the sake of protecting everything.

“…Onii-sama…you really are, hopelessly stupid…”

A stream of tears flowed down Rias’ cheeks as she conveyed her own thoughts—.

Soon, it would be her high school graduation ceremony.

…I am going to depart on a journey from there, and I originally hoped that you would see that moment….

This battle, and the scene before her eyes, it was something that Rias would not forget for the rest of her life—.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ ane: Elder sister.
2. ↑ ani: Elder brother.

Y Ddraig Goch & Albion Gwiber

I, Hyoudou Issei opened my eyes, and the first thing that I saw was — a white ceiling. I smelt a rather distinctive scent, and then finally understood that I was currently inside a hospital…. These unpleasant experiences have been increasing. When I moved my upper body to sit upright, a voice came from my side. It was actually Vali who was sitting on the chair beside the bed to accompany me.

“It seems you finally woke up, Hyoudou Issei.”

“…No way, I never imagined that the first person I would see after waking up would be you.”

It wasn’t Rias, nor was it Asia, and neither was it any of my other nakama, it was the truly unexpected Vali. Vali smiled to himself bitterly.

“After confirming that your condition was back to normal, the members of Team [DxD], of course that includes my team and the Gremory household, went off to deal with the aftermath of the battle. You and I were confined in here so that we could get some good rest.”

Oh, to allow me and Vali to rest? I remembered that while Vali went to Europe to stop Trihexa, I went to Japan to stop Trihexa….

“Yes, speaking of which, w-why am I okay…? I remember that because of the consequences of Dragon Deification, I should…”

I frantically touched every part of my body! That’s right! At that time, I already prepared myself for Dragon Deification…and I also fought together with Sirzechs-sama against Trihexa’s core!

“Ah, speaking of that—”

Just as Vali was about to begin explaining, someone suddenly sprang out from under the bed and called out

“Ise, you woke up?”

With flowing long hair that was deep black in colour, it was an extraordinary beauty! She was wearing a black outfit, and her o-

oppai were staggeringly large! Why was such a beautiful onee-san in this patient room!?

“Are you awake? Are you awake?”

This time it was a relatively smaller girl who appeared from behind Vali. A girl who looked like and was formed from Ophis — Lilith! W-Was it okay for her to be in this patient room…? On that topic, when did she also come over here….

…….

…I then realised the change that had occurred within myself! —I was able to see oppai!

Originally, due to the aftereffects of Dragon Deification, I couldn't see oppai, let alone speak about them! Moreover, this was also the second time that I had used Dragon Deification, so it wouldn't be surprising if I died straight afterwards! Even if I was saved and brought back, I should be suffering from the long-term side effects of it for the rest of my life! Upon seeing the puzzled expression on my face, Vali explained it to me

"You originally suffered from the burden and repercussions of Dragon Deification, but Ophis, who you borrowed that power from adjusted it. So this is what the result is."

—Vali pointed to the black-haired beauty. The beauty tilted her head and said “I, Ophis? Ise doesn’t recognise?”….

…….

…….

…I temporarily stopped thinking…if I looked closely at this beauty…she did indeed have a resemblance to Ophis, perhaps if she grew up, this is what she would look like. No, having said that, would a Dragon God-sama grow up? No, let’s not talk about that first….

“Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeehhhhhh!?”

I cried out in surprise! Although it wasn’t good to raise one’s voice in a hospital room, I couldn’t help crying out upon hearing that! Eeeeeeeehhh, Ophis actually became like this!?

“O-O-OOOOOOOOOOO-Ophis……is that really you?”

I pointed at the beauty with my finger — Ophis nodded her head slightly. It really was a gesture that only Ophis would do. Vali said

“Because you overused the power of Dragon Deification, your existence became ambiguous, and your life was also hanging by a thread — so ultimately, Ophis shouldered all of the aftereffects. As a result, this is the appearance that she now has. Moreover, it seems like she has almost become fixed into this woman’s body.”

…No way, Ophis took it for me…. Vali continued

“Lodged inside your body was the power of infinity, that is, the power of Dragon Deification, and even with the flesh of Great Red, you were originally a human, so it is impossible for you to withstand it. It was then that Ophis came to adjust it, no, it should be said that she received it on your behalf. She stabilised that power to a level that your body and mind could withstand.”

So that’s how it is. Originally, after suffering from the repercussions of Dragon Deification a second time, even if my body…was destroyed, it would not be surprising.

“Well, I can’t use Dragon Deification again huh.”

“If you’re talking about the power output you had during the time

when you fought against Rizevim or Trihexa, you won't be able to use it again unless you become a god. Even my lifespan has been reduced by a lot. But, I also received a blessing from the Dragon God."

Blessing? A question mark floated above my head. Ophis, who had turned into a beauty answered that question for me

"At that time, you awakened the armour with my power, and you can continue to use that form. But, its power has been decreased by a great extent. However, there is also room for improvement."

Oh, so I can still change into that red and black streaked armour. However, it won't have abilities of infinity, and its immense strength has also been decreased. But that is still enough. Even if that power has been reduced, it's still incredibly strong. At the very least, it's far above that of my [True Queen] form. And there's also room for improvement. So it'll be fine if I just do more training.

"Pseudo Dragon Deification?"

Ophis shook her head from side to side and then nodded as she said that term…. [Pseudo Dragon Deification] huh, there was an indescribable subtlety in that, but I guess it did actually have that kind of a feeling. Vali said

"However, it hasn't even been a full year since you awakened your Sacred Gear, became a reincarnated Devil and reached a near god-class state; under these circumstances, not only was your body, but also your mind and soul were unable to withstand these changes. — Your growth has been too sudden."

…It was just as that guy said. In this past year, my power has been continually growing. Although part of the reason was due to facing off against fierce enemies, it wasn't surprising that my body would collapse from such an erratic growth in power. That's roughly how things were right now. A Devil that can live for ten thousand years has become like this in the span of just one short year…. My career as a Devil is really quite worrying…. I don't want every year to be like this during the ten thousand years of my life to come…. I couldn't help clutching my head. Perhaps tired of our conversation now, Lilith untied the hair on one side of her head and said

"Together with the other Lilith, together with the other Lilith."

while playing with her hair. Lilith and Ophis did indeed look alike

when she unravelled her hair like that…. Ophis pat Lilith's head. Although a lot of things have happened, it could be said that all of Ophis' power had once again returned to one place. Vali's facial expression suddenly became somewhat strange.

"Hyoudou Issei…this is a message for you. —Starting with Sirzechs Lucifer, the current Leviathan, and current Asmodeus, these three Maous as well as the leaders of various factions have accompanied Trihexa to another dimension."

"—What!?"

Vali's words greatly surprised me. In order to truly keep the damage from Trihexa, which had split itself apart to a minimum, it was transported into a dedicated isolation barrier. And in order to contain it, warriors were elected from each of the various factions to fight against it. Those people were the higher ups of each faction. Among them were the Maous like Sirzechs-sama, Serafall-sama, Michael-sama, and that old man Odin. After that, Vali explained to me the last actions that the higher ups took. …I finally remembered the scene from that time. Because I was paralysed and had collapsed on the floor as a result of Dragon Deification, Sirzechs-sama spoke with a parting tone while beside me. So that…wasn't a dream. …W-Why is it like this, Sirzechs-sama…. Seeing my immense shock, Vali continued

"Azazel also went in."

"—What!! Sensei too? T-That…"

"…Right now, we can no longer see him."

…….

…I looked up at the ceiling. …I couldn't say anything. I could not utter a single word. Even if I wanted to complain to him, he's no longer here now…? I covered my face with my hand, and asked Vali

"How long is it at the moment? Half a year or a few years?"

"…According to the Valkyrie on your side…it'll be a few thousand years at the least, or perhaps ten thousand years. That's how difficult it is to bring down that strengthened Trihexa. Even the God of the Bible expended all of his power to seal it away."

…Ten thousand years…. …We might not even be able to see each other for a year…! There were still so many things that I wanted to talk about with sensei. I also wanted to hear more of his advice…! It'll actually take ten thousand years…how can that be!?

"……All of that, how, how can it be. It'll actually need…s-several thousand years, or even ten thousand years…"

In my heart, I wanted to release all of that anger, grief, and sadness, but I was unable to, and a variety of emotions swirled around in my chest and mind. How was Vali able to remain so calm whilst I was thinking of all of these things — which is when I realised that something was very strange. His voice was also trembling.

"……Yeah. I really can't stand him. …He always says and does whatever he wants selfishly. …He's obviously taught us so much, so going off on his own…"

Seeing this unexpected reaction from my rival — I involuntarily began to shed tears. …Damn you, don't let me see you with a reaction like that right now…! It's too horrible…! Normally, when we were in situations such as these, sensei would call out as he arrived, and then start making jokes. But — no matter how long we waited, sensei still didn't show up in the patient room. Vali said to me

"…Azazel said you that you were his last, and his best student…"

…….

……You're too mean, sensei…. I couldn't hold back the tears which were welling up, and began to sob. I recalled all sorts of encounters, training sessions, times when I fought against powerful enemies, the times when we were in Kyoto and the Vampire's country; all of the places that we travelled to together emerged within my mind, as if coming through a set of revolving doors…. …I defeated Apophis…. What would sensei say to me normally…? Ophis held my hand.

"…I'm still here. I, regardless of whether it's one thousand years, or ten thousand years, I will stay by Ise's and Vali's side."

"Then, Lilith also wants to be together."

Lilith also took hold of my hand and Ophis' hand. …So these are the so-called people that we gain when others are lost huh. Vali sighed

“…It will be a very long time. —But, both you and I have bodies which will somehow be able to survive that length of time. For when he returns.”

Vali suddenly looked out the window, and his voice trembled even more.

“At the very least, we need to complain to him one more time.”

“Yeah.”

What awaited me from here on was a world without Sirzechs-sama and Azazel-sensei. It will be a terribly long time in comparison to the time that was spent together with them, in this world that was now without them—. If we had the power and the determination to defeat the ‘enemy’ sooner, perhaps we would not have arrived at such an outcome…. For the seventeen year old I, it was the first time in my life that I experienced such intense tragedy and regret. With this battle as a turning point, a decisive change occurred in the minds of the Two Heavenly Dragons. The thought of protecting something was born within Vali, and as for I — the determination to always destroy the ‘enemy’ was born within me. Indeed, if I didn’t possess that resolve, then someone would definitely disappear. If that’s the case, then I should—.

Report

The following are the main authorities who have been lost by the various factions.

Heaven

- Michael and his Brave Saints (Ace excluded)
- Raphael and his Brave Saints (Ace excluded)
- Uriel and his Brave Saints (Ace excluded)

Underworld

- Sirzechs Lucifer and his peerage (Queen excluded)
- Serafall Leviathan and her peerage (Queen excluded)
- Falbium Asmodeus and his peerage (Queen excluded)
- Fallen Angel Cadre Azazel

Norse Mythology

- Chief God of the Norse Mythology, Odin, and six other major gods

Mount Olympus

- Chief God of the Greek Mythology, Zeus, and ten other major gods

Hindu Mythology

- Brahma, Vishnu, and seven other major gods

Other factions (Japanese Mythology, Chinese Mythology, Egyptian Mythology, Celtic Mythology, and others) also had some of their major gods join the eternal battle against Trihexa.

Despite this, Trihexa is still currently alive.

Afterwards, this historic battle in which various factions participated became known as [The Chaos of Lilin], and [The Evil Dragon Campaign], but also came to an end for the time being—.

Historians have described the campaign as ‘A historic loss of powers from all of the mythologies’. Especially significant is the combat strength of Heaven and the Underworld, which significantly

declined; the overall combat strength that The Three Factions worked hard to recover after the War was once again exhausted.

In the human world, Trihexa and the Evil Dragons left behind a tremendous impact, as well as the irregular, supernatural presences which fought against them; all of them were recorded by the media, and it triggered an enormous and controversial debate between humans. And so, this battle left behind an inerasable scar on both the human world, and the supernatural worlds. However, in this campaign, a new hope was also born. Two future Super Devil candidates appeared on the Devil's side. They were the ones known within the history of the Two Heavenly Dragons as the rare talents [Hakuryuukou of the Morning Star] Vali Lucifer and [Sekiryuutei of the Blazing Truth][1] Hyoudou Issei—.

In addition, several days after the end of this campaign, a certain proposal was passed in the upper echelons of the Underworld.

—Rias Gremory's servant 'Hyoudou Issei' was nominated for a promotion to become a high-class Devil. Being advocated for a promotion to a high-class Devil within less than a year after reincarnation, this was an exception among exceptions that had never occurred in the past.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ Kana reads as Issei, which also means honesty

The remaining hopes

The story which follows became the most important, and most confidential conversation.

Several days after the battle known as the [Evil Dragon Campaign] concluded, the figures of two people appeared on a particular beach. The celestial bodies in the night sky illuminated the sandy beach — and the two people there. This was the space that Ajuka Beelzebub created by using a certain place as inspiration. Accompanied by the gentle sound of the waves playing a melody, the two figures — the bewitching Maou Ajuka Beelzebub and the innocent looking youth Shiva sat down at a round table. On the beach at night, while sitting around the round table, the two people began their clandestine meeting. Shiva began first

“The sacrifices have been too great. —However, this is also necessary for the peace before our eyes. The higher ups of the Three Factions, Odin, Zeus and the others have all given me insight into their determination. —Very well. Until they return, I will also try to protect this world.”

Ajuka asked Shiva

“Is that alright? Didn’t you accept the proposal of former Governor Azazel before, when Trihexa was going to invade the other world, you would appear to stop it…”

Indeed, that was the original agreement that had been made between Shiva and Azazel. —But to Shiva, the actions of Azazel and the others stimulated his own aesthetics. As members of the top brass, the actions of Azazel and the others during this incident attracted a lot of condemnation and unease. Irresponsible actions that did not consider the consequences, or what would have happened if the Isolation Barrier Field was unable to contain Trihexa; many comments such as these arose. However, Shiva thought that their actions were worthy of praise.

“Protecting this world — if I didn’t have that resolve, wouldn’t it be quite rude to them? Moreover, Brahma and Vishnu also insisted that I stay and they entrusted me with the task of being the stopping force from now on. —Following this, what is going to happen to the situation in the Underworld?”

“Yes. Currently, the capital of Lilith is—”

They were beginning with the aftermath of the battle, and they were also assisting with the human world.

“The damage to the human world cannot be ignored, but thanks to the power of the gods of each faction, it seems to have already recovered quite significantly.”

Just as Ajuka said, the natural environment that Trihexa and the Evil Dragons had destroyed in the human world were repaired by relying on the power of god-class beings. The lives which were lost…although difficult to deal with, it became a subject that the god-class beings would need to consider in the future. Yet, there was an even more pressing matter. The video recording of the battle had already become a source of widespread attention across the human world. The presence of supernatural beings had undoubtedly been exposed. Shiva said

“In the area that worships my mythology, through the rulers of the humans, we can fabricate or destroy records. However, there is a limit to that…there are simply too many details regarding this incident that we must not allow humans to know. Other mythologies are also in a similar situation. If the balance in the human world is tipped, the influence of mythologies will also be affected. This is something which must be avoided.”

Ajuka also agreed with Shiva’s points.

“The forces on my side have been cooperating with Heaven, and have been doing similar things to your side. But it would be extremely difficult to completely eliminate it…”

From the perspective of an ordinary person, the video would simply seem like a CG produced monster movie. There were many people who thought like that. However, there were also many humans who realised that ‘something big happened’. Although some would think of it as ‘some country’s military experiment’ or ‘the work of terrorists’, the recording of this incident would more or less have an impact on the future of the human world. After Ajuka and Shiva exchanged information from their respective sides, they finally arrived at the core matter of their conversation. With no reservations, Shiva got directly into the matter

“After all, Rizevim and the Evil Dragons…at the very least, Aži Dahāka and Apophis already have some degree of understanding of

that other world."

Ajuka affirmed what Shiva said as he nodded.

"Yes, evidently, they seem to have obtained some kind of information. However, even I could also reproduce a part of that world like this."

"In your case, you came in contact with it through a Longinus. It won't be made known to the other side, right?"

"At the very least, I wouldn't let them find out that I'm doing anything. But because of that, there are too many things that I don't know about."

Ajuka solemnly continued

"…However, there will come a day when [they] have the possibility to invade and attack. During the fight between the Two Heavenly Dragons and Loki, they encountered one of the gods on that side. And what's worse is that over the course of this incident, [they] have already become aware of our existence."

The Maou placed a summarised report on top of the table. The cover of the report read 'Top Secret'. Ajuka continued

"This report is something that the former Governor Azazel gave me and some other trusted VIPs before he departed. Described within it are the results of a particular investigation."

Shiva reached out to pick up the report, and skimmed through it quickly. His expression then became complicated. While Shiva's attention was still focused on the report, Ajuka said

"—Rizevim has sent the transportation techniques of the various factions over to that side. On top of Agreas, which has been returned, residual traces of several transfers have been found."

"I see, rather than objects, information has been transferred over to that side. Of all things, it had to be information about teleportation. If that side is able to decipher it, they'll be able to bypass Great Red, and come straight to us. That incarnation of terrorism left behind a diversity of malice before he died. At this point, I can only express my amazement at him."

Rizevim, Aži Dahāka and Apophis attempted to communicate with

the other world. And they succeeded. On top of that, not only did they send a full declaration of war, they also sent over a wide variety of information on teleportation techniques to that side. Simply put, it was a crazy idea which involved pouring verbal abuse and malice at them, and then telling them everything about how to invade one's own home. Someone who could think of something like that was absolutely stupid. It was no different from the young people of the human world who flooded social networking services with abuse, but the problem was that this was on a planetary scale. That son of the former Lucifer was a bastard who would celebrate by drawing not only himself, but all living things into a war. Rizevim was the crystallisation of malice in the truest sense. The scars that he left behind after death were still deeply, deeply carved—. With a complex expression on his face, Ajuka said

"If the techniques that Rizevim sent over are deciphered, the time required to break through the Dimensional Gap…going by the calculations of former Governor Azazel and my Beelzebub side, it would be — approximately thirty years from now. At that time, the messengers from [the other world] will arrive here."

In response to this information, Shiva could only laugh.

"That's rather early. To supernatural existences like us, that could be described as a mere blink of the eye."

"Yes, Sirzechs and former Governor Azazel were also concerned about this matter before they left. It has also been made clear that the Malevolent God on that side is an evil existence…"

"A fight against the god of another world — huh. …However, this is, after all, still to come. Compared to that, what I would pay more attention to right now is—"

"—Indra, The Heavenly Emperor, right?"

Even if they could foresee the invasion from another world, the estrangement between the various factions still had not been eliminated. In particular were those who had dangerous ideas, such as Hades of the Greek Mythology, and The Heavenly Emperor — Indra.

"With the disappearance of the higher ups of the various factions, this is an excellent opportunity, that's probably what that God of War is thinking. After all, no matter when and where, he is a God of

[War] that only thinks of battle. Having thirty years is enough for him to prepare."

Whilst saying that, the God of Destruction had such thoughts while laughing. This youth God was also a supernatural existence who enjoyed battle. As if to urge some restraint, Ajuka said

"…If a large-scale war also occurred under such circumstances, thinking of the future, it will only result in destruction."

Shiva shrugged his shoulders.

"My side has also bid farewell to Brahma, Vishnu, and several other major gods. If it develops into a war with Indra, it will also have a tremendous impact on the human world. After all, Indra already predicted that such a day would come, so he has constantly been expanding his own forces."

Indeed, the Hindu Mythology was renowned as the strongest among all the various factions of the world, and two of its three major gods had already gone to participate in the eternal battle against Trihexa. The only remaining major god of the Hindu Mythology now was Shiva. It was also precisely because of this, that upon seeing that the God of War didn't butt into the battle, it could be assumed that he had finished his preparations. Because that Indra was more hostile to Shiva than anyone else—.

"Really, it's quite troublesome."

Although he muttered that, there didn't appear to be any trace of concern on Shiva's face. Shiva changed the subject and said to Ajuka

"It would be best if you made preparations for your 'replacement'. After all, Emperor Belial's declaration has created chaos within the upper echelons of the Underworld, right? This is also a good opportunity. It could make for a good reform. —It could lead to the [Seven Great Maou] system that was previously proposed. I heard that you were the one who proposed this to be modelled after the seven deadly sins, right?"

"Yes, this time it won't just be the Devil's side; it has been predetermined that the higher ups of other allied factions will vote to elect candidates. The range will be from Lucifer, Leviathan, Asmodeus, Belial, as well as Mammon and Belphegor, which have been elected from the Extra Demons."

“Until then, you’ll be the one and only Maou. Iyahaha, you certainly will be busy.”

“That’s why I stayed behind. Until Sirzechs returns, I will continue to remain on the stage.”

Sirzechs also understood that. So long as Ajuka held that will, regardless of whether it was Sirzechs’ duties, or Falbium’s duties, he would bear the responsibility for all of it—. Although he didn’t possess the idol-like charisma of Serafall, Ajuka would perform the duties of the Four Great Satans to the end. The other current Maous also understood this, which is why they set off for the Isolation Barrier Field. Having been left behind, Ajuka listened to the wishes of his close friends, and swore to them that he would protect the seat of Beelzebub forever. Shiva said

“—However, before the issues with the higher ups are tackled, a [piece] is necessary to act. As long as there are good [pieces], ‘war’ will not be triggered. Rizevim’s plan will eventually fail as a result of the peace that will be maintained between the factions. That’s what the gods of the various factions also think. —It is necessary to nurture the strong people of their own faction to ensure that there are capable people in the future. Otherwise, let alone a terrorist attack, they may have to succumb to other factions. Ajuka, you also foresaw this, so you formulated a plan with Sirzechs Lucifer and Azazel. —A plan for every faction. It doesn’t sound too bad.”

It was unknown where Shiva obtained it, but he took out a new report from his inner pocket. It was — the [International Rating Game Tournament] proposal.

“This plan will allow everyone to unite together. In order prepare for future attacks — it will cultivate strong people. And more than anything, it will allow everyone to rejoice together.”

Ajuka was able to speculate the true intention behind Shiva’s words. The convening of such a large-scale tournament might result in some opposition, and this God of Destruction would suppress them. Acting as a proxy war between the various factions of the world, this would be able to dampen the ambitions and hostilities between the various factions…that was the original purpose of the plan that Sirzechs and Azazel thought of. If this was ignored and a war was instigated, it would garner condemnation from the various factions. The factions that participated in it would receive the aid of other factions. This kind of situation was absolutely undesirable to the

Heavenly Emperor. For this reason, Sirzechs and Azazel designed a large-scale project that would promote peace and calm any restlessness. But because of Rizevim's malice, this plan was delayed and wasn't able to be realised…. Having said that, it was also unclear how much trust this God of Destruction inherited from them; Shiva's true intentions and whether Heavenly Emperor would accept this, there were many disturbing elements at play. However, if it could function as a proxy war between the various factions—.

—Why don't you organise a [Game] that anyone can enjoy?

As if he could hear the voice of Sirzechs say that, Ajuka smiled slightly. In fact, before the internationalisation of the Rating Games could be opened, there were many current issues that had to be dealt with first, and a total restructure was necessary. The Rating Games were no longer just something that belonged to the Devils, if they became a competition that all faction could enjoy, it would need to undergo rigorous monitoring by the various factions. In that case, it would become a better competition than what it currently was. This was — the future that Sirzechs, Azazel, and Champion Belial desired. In fact, since the last year, Sirzechs and Azazel had begun managing various companies in the Devils' and Fallen Angels' territory, and even in Heaven — the other forces which were led by the Christian religion, including its related companies; they had been secretly supporting a proposed contract for internationalisation.

—Hey, Sirzechs. Honestly, you really just wanted to see your imouto and brother-in-law as representatives for the Devils, so that you could watch them defeat the teams of other factions and be proud of them, right?

In order to allow his friend to witness this scene, Ajuka Beelzebub began to act. Thus, the banquet finally began—.

The curtains have finally risen on the greatest and final event of Hyoudou Issei's high school life.

Afterword

Long time no see, it's Ichiei Ishibumi. The fourth arc which was started in the second half of 2012 has finally ended. It actually took three years, so it's really quite long. I was very nervous while writing the twenty first volume. I think the readers also thought that way. Volume twenty one was full of climactic battles! Indeed, that is so.

Sairaorg + Saji versus Bedeze -> Vali versus Aži Dahāka -> Ise versus Apophis -> Ise & Sirzechs versus Trihexa's core

…A total of more than four climactic battles were included within this volume. More than any other in the past. As popular characters, Sairaorg and Vali also received a second power up. Sorry, it would only appear at the end of an arc like this so please forgive me…. Looking back on the fourth arc, this period was the most mentally difficult for me, especially during the period that I wrote volumes sixteen ~ nineteen. I had to prepare so many heroines (+Gasper) for the story, so it feels a bit too stiff. The content was also somewhat weak, and perhaps the reason is because it was very painful at that time to write. The attitude of 'Regardless of whether it's a heroine role, or the fight between some kids, I want to write it!' continued to accumulate, and this eventually burst out in the previous volume, and the final part of the battle, this volume. And precisely because of this, this volume, the previous volume, and DxD's second ~ twelfth volumes are the most satisfying for me. If the readers who didn't finish reading the fourth arc because it was too long are seeing this, then I want to tell you 'the fourth arc is finally over!'.

Changing the subject a bit, the next section is about Ise, Vali and the situation on Team [DxD]. Because this time it was Vali's volume, I was finally able to dig into his true character. Since it won't be good if it he isn't confirmed as Ise's ultimate rival, the scenes of Azazel in this story were written around this. Much like the previous volume, Vali's focus is also about parents. But it was a sad story this time. The two people have been made to stand at opposite ends of the spectrum. Vali finally Maouified! What he gained was a transformation power up. Moreover, I think Vali's form will also become known as [DxD][1]. If Ise's new form is called [DxD] G (God), then Vali's new form would be [DxD] L (Lucifer). By the way, the wyverns which appeared during Vali's fight are

Funnels[2]. Regarding the legendary [White Dragon], there are many versions of its name. DxD uses the 'Latin [White] as etymology', and contains numerous meanings to appear as [Albion]. While Ise and Ddraig underwent training, Vali also powered up accordingly, and used this opportunity to use the true name of [Gwiber]. Ise also responded in his style with the use of ∞ Blaster[3] + Longinus Smasher, a terrain changing blast with incredible firepower. Sairaorg has transformed into the Beast of Supremacy which was only mentioned previously. Dulio and Tobio have also displayed their Balance Breakers. However, neither of their special abilities have been completely revealed. Also, Elmenhilde has appeared once again. She already appeared once in the short story that was published in Dragon Magazine, and I will probably include it in the third volume of DX.

Next is about the boss of the fourth arc. Rizevim has already prepared the stage for the event that readers hate very much. Thus, Aži Dahāka, Apophis and Trihexa were the best candidates for the enemies of the conclusion of the fourth arc. I especially enjoyed writing the fights of Aži Dahāka and Apophis. The character of Aži Dahāka was inspired by King Ghidorah[4]. And because of that, it had the feel of a boss when I was writing it. I was very happy to be able to write about this massive three-headed dragon like a monster. Apophis himself is a mass of unpredictable darkness. No matter how Issei attacked, he was unable to cause any damage. Aside from borrowing an extraordinarily powerful attack power, only a god named after the sun would be able to defeat him. Trihexa is considered to be a true monster. It could easily destroy the entire world. This time, it also caused massive amounts of damage to the territories of each faction, and it is also the most destructive force in DxD. If Azazel's plan didn't exist, then even more gods would have been defeated. Its strength is roughly equivalent to a serious Great Red and Ophis in her prime, or perhaps even superior to them. It also noticed the abnormality of Ise, who inherited the power of both those Dragon Gods.

Allow me to change the subject again, this section is about the other world [ExE][5]. The setting has finally been revealed. High School DxD will not be replaced by [ExE]. However, it has already been determined that they will come into contact with each other in thirty years. So, what will develop from that in the end? Please wait patiently. By the way, DxD is an original view of the world, and is not related to any actual myths. In fact, this has already been touched upon by the extra story of DxD. Bundled with the BD/DVD of the third season of the anime [High School DxD BorN] were the

special short stories [High School DxD EX], in which the invasion from the other world and Ise's children from the future were written about, of which there are a total of six parts. The extra short stories and their complementing optical media are a limited first production item. As I am unsure about the initial stock of each store, if readers wish to buy it, please keep an eye out for it.

Next are my acknowledgements. Miyama-Zero-sama, editor H-sama. This time I bothered you right up until the deadline, so I'm very sorry. Thanks to you, the script that I finished could be published.

The fourth arc has mostly ended. Yes, the second half of the next volume will be the beginning of the final arc! The fifth and final arc will have the main themes of 'DxD's final decisive battle' and 'lively ceremonies'. The first half of the next volume will act as the epilogue of the fourth arc, as well as the graduation ceremony of Rias, Akeno and the other third years. It will be the end of a generation. Volume twenty two will have Rias and Akeno as the focus. Also, it was mentioned in the second volume of DX that volume twenty two would have an intriguing start to look forward to. A flag has been buried in this volume. I think the fans will be very excited to continue. As such, the second half of the next volume will be the start of the fifth and final arc. I'm very grateful to the readers who can accompany DxD to the end.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ Kana was Diabolos Dragon. The next two instances of DxD are also Diabolos Dragon.
2. ↑ Gundam reference to the Funnel-Type weapons.
3. ↑ Pronounced as: Infinity Blaster.
4. ↑ Reference to the golden three-headed dragon in Godzilla.
5. ↑ Kana was Evie Etoulde.

High School DxD - Volume 21

—Lucifer of the Optional Attendance

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